Eating Culture

An Anthropological Guide to Food

SECOND EDITION

Gillian Crowther

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For Mabel Crowther, the source of my culinary wisdom,
and Heather MacKay, the recipient of my culinary endeavours.
In memory of Bia MacKay.

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A second rendering of this book has allowed me the opportunity to adjust the recipe, by slow cooking the ingredients, rebalancing the flavours, and, with some vigorous stirring, adding some new textures. Toward this second dishing I restocked my larder of academic ingredients, many purveyed by the library staff at Capilano, and sought out the fine palates of my many colleagues in the School of Social Sciences, including Nigel Amon, Maureen Bracewell, Sandra Cooper, Rita Isola, Laura MacKay, Bob Muckle, Sheila Ross, Cheryl Schreader, Judy Te Kanawa, and Mahak Yaseri. Furthermore, thanks must be extended to the first and second edition anonymous reviewers, and Tim Roufs. All offered important constructive criticism that enhanced the resulting flavours, and added balance and depth. On a practical level of plating up this second dish, further thanks are due to Don LePan of Broadview Press, and Mat Buntin of UTP, who encouraged me to submit a proposal. The ever-supportive Anne Brackenbury's honest insights, delivered with humour and tact, have kneaded me in the right direction. Similarly, thanks go to all the UTP staff and designers, such as Beate Schwirtlich and Julia Cadney; The Editing Company's Barbara Kamienski, who carefully adjusted the seasonings; and many others whose names I do not know, but whose hands have helped dish up this book. (Any overflavouring, or cooking mishaps, however, are my responsibility.) It is my hope that something you read in these pages will whet your appetite for more anthropological dishes.

FIGURE 0.1
Cutlery: Culturally fashioned implements for polite food consumption.

PROLOGUE

SETTING THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL TABLE

An array of rather formal-looking cutlery can be a daunting sight, and I vividly remember one occasion when the complexity of my place setting caused me quite a bit of anxiety. A friend's parents had invited us out to dinner at a "fancy" restaurant. I did not know them very well, and I wanted to make a good impression. A menu, a meal of many courses: What should I choose? My menu had no prices, so I couldn't weigh up the social niceties of choosing something reasonably priced. Instead, I carefully listened and watched everyone, taking cues from them about the selection of dishes and following their choices. When the first course arrived, I hesitantly selected my cutlery, hoping to pass the etiquette test. I was okay until the bread was served and I helped myself. I had failed to notice the others subtly pointing to a selected piece and waiting for the server to place the bread on the side plate. A faux pas: my cover was blown. I was an interloper at the table, although everyone was far too polite to draw attention to my discomfort.

I did enjoy the meal, and the company, but it was made memorable by my anxiety over cutlery and etiquette. Since then I've been lucky enough to share meals in many places and now feel less daunted, but I am still very aware of the unspoken pressure of the norms of **commensality**. I now regard cutlery as just a tool, although one surrounded with traditional rules, that cuts our food into manageable morsels, ferries it into our mouths where we taste, chew, swallow, and begin to digest its substance. Just like cutlery, the anthropological approach of this book can be regarded as offering a set of methodological and theoretical tools, not too daunting, to enable us to select, assess, chew, and mentally digest the significance of meals and dishes from a variety of **cuisine**s. It aims to provide a guide to the world's rich diversity of eating culture and to help explore the similarities, understand the differences, and draw some general conclusions about our relationship with food.

Social anthropology is the study of the everyday lives of ordinary people anywhere, and food is a constant—whether locally produced or globally sourced, it will always be eaten locally, as a member of society. Food, together with air and water, is the stuff of life, and it is the basic foundation of **culture** and society. The quest for food has been an essential part of the evolution of humans through the millennia, accounting for the formation of cooperative foraging groups and serving as a source of our sociability through cooking and sharing food (Jones 2007; Wrangham 2009). Food is vital to our health and well-being, and yet humanity is still witnessing a struggle to produce, exchange, and eat the food we all need. Food is our everyday creative and meaningful engagement with nature through culture; indeed, food becomes cultured nature, an artifact. The designation as "food" underscores the cultural construction of what is determined to be edible and places it in the category of an artifact, made by human ingenuity, from a series of ingredients and flavours, crafted and aestheticized into a dish. Humans don't just randomly feed; we select, fashion, concoct, and make an edible assemblage that fits our imagining of food. This is an intimate relationship with an artifact, like no other; food is the only consumed cultural artifact that quite literally becomes us. Our relationship with it begins in the womb and extends throughout our lives as it shapes our daily habits and influences our health, defines our personal and group identity, and engages our minds and hands in the acquisition, preparation, and consumption of it. Yet this is a relationship that can be relegated to one that is presumed to be ubiquitous, ordinary, or quotidian, and as such its significance in our lives can easily be overlooked. This happens especially when the provision of food is made so convenient that we devote ourselves to other activities and stop to eat only when hunger reminds us we need some fuel. Even so, what we eat is culturally and socially patterned. This book examines our changing relationship with food based upon its essential, chosen, patterned, discursive, and dynamic qualities.

AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPETITE FOR FOOD

Humans have an appetite for food, and anthropology, as the study of human beings, their culture and society, through time and in any context, has an interest in the role of food. In the work of two important early anthropologists, Franz Boas in North America and Bronisław Malinowski in Europe, the presence of food is revealed in their respective writings on the Kwakiutl (Boas 1921) and Trobriand Islanders (Malinowski [1922] 1966), but its place was often eclipsed by the content of winter ceremonials, social organization, and the complexities of the *kula* ring or magic. Despite this, there were facts about what was deemed to be food—how it was cooked, and who ate together—that were included as background to the broader ethnographic narrative. This stands as a testament to both Boas's and Malinowski's emphasis upon including detailed descriptions of the everyday and the extraordinary occasions of life. For instance,

Malinowski offers his thoughts on the "subject, method and scope" of social anthropology, and these still stand the test of time. He presented an early, candid outline of the scientific fieldwork method, beginning with the need to identify the framework of society, the context, which he noted could lack the everyday "realities of human life." To correct this, "the imponderabilia of actual life" must be observed and vividly described, including "the manner of taking food and preparing it" (Malinowski 1966, 18). As he says, we must "remember that these imponderable, yet all important, facts of actual life are part of the real substance of the social fabric, that in them are spun the innumerable threads which keep together the family, the clan, the village community, the tribe—their significance becomes clear" (19). The everyday reality of life is most strongly felt and experienced by individuals, and Malinowski reminds the discipline of the need to include this in any fieldwork. He also recognizes that the imponderabilia apply equally to any culture and society, including ourselves, alerting us to the importance of reflecting on our own, often taken-for-granted activities, such as preparing food and eating. The activities surrounding food acquisition, preparation, and consumption lend themselves to cross-cultural comparison, allowing us to conjure into existence others' lives through a shared everyday experience of eating. This can be combined with Malinowski's third aim of scientific fieldwork: to record "the spirit—the natives' views and opinions and utterances" (22). Here he captures the importance of the inside meanings given to life, those articulated by members of society and heard by the ethnographer in conversations, in interviews, and expressed as **public discourse**. While Malinowski's language does not reflect current anthropological usage, his "final goal" remains valid: "to grasp the native's point of view, his relation to life, to realise his vision of his world" and in so doing perhaps "we shall have some light shed on our own" (25). Despite the age of Malinowski's work, it still rings true—the ordinary things of life are important and worthy of study, and this is exactly what the recent generation of anthropologists has done in regard to food.

SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL METHODS AND PRINCIPLES

Anthropology is a very broad discipline, and as such it has divided itself into a series of subfields, within which scholars concentrate upon specific questions pertaining to human existence. While this book will make a brief foray into the subfield of biological anthropology, it is primarily concerned with the findings from social anthropology. In keeping with the eclectic interests of social anthropologists, there is considerable overlap between their research and that of other disciplines addressing food, such as cultural geography, history, women's studies, psychology, sociology, philosophy, and economics. This book draws upon the excellent work of researchers from all these disciplines and incorporates it into an overview guided by the principles of social anthropology. It will also highlight some of the different theoretical traditions employed by social anthropologists as they have assessed and made sense of their

research findings. But to begin, it is fieldwork that particularly distinguishes social anthropology, although this method's utility has also appealed to other disciplines over the last decade. Within the ethnographic method are other anthropological approaches, such as holism and comparison, and the principle of cultural relativism, as discussed below.

Ethnographic Fieldwork—Local and Global

Social anthropologists will conduct fieldwork for a relatively long period of time, and write an ethnographic account of the culture under study based upon their participant-observation. Malinowski's ([1922] 1966) definition of ethnography as the "empirical and descriptive results" (9) of fieldwork still captures its essence. Fieldwork can be conducted in both unfamiliar and familiar settings, since the discipline is concerned with human life anywhere, and its approach encourages cross-cultural comparison. However, the early beginnings of social anthropology tended to focus on non-Western societies where social anthropologists conducted fieldwork as part of "comparative sociology," and while this legacy still lingers, it is not an absolute mandate. Early ethnographic work produced accounts of all aspects of a specific culture, providing a holistic record of its traditional lifeways. Many early social anthropologists included details about how food was acquired and used in particular cultures; for example, John Swanton (1905) in his material on the Haida, A.R. Radcliffe-Brown ([1922] 1964) in his study of Andaman Islanders, and Audrey Richards ([1939] 1969; [1932] 1964) in her early work with the Bemba. Holism recognizes that all aspects of a culture are interconnected and influence one another. The holistic study of food reveals how its classification, form, and uses are intimately connected to food-getting strategies, the division of labour, exchange, social and political organization, religion, and intimate ties of kinship and friendship.

The early ethnographies created an illusion of culture as a bounded, timeless, fixed set of characteristic beliefs, values, norms, traditions, and behaviour that would define its members into the present day. The use of the ethnographic present has underscored this representation of culture. The issue of change, and how it occurred, challenged the accuracy of portraying cultures in the present tense, and gradually through many years of subsequent theoretical debates the representation and understanding of culture became considerably more complex (Clifford and Marcus 1986; Clifford 1988; Marcus 1995). This shifted the focus of ethnographies away from somewhat static portraits to become problem focused, addressing specific aspects of people's practices through more specialized theoretical approaches that consider such areas as economics, politics, religion, and kinship. These ethnographies are located at a specific time and place, revealing the changing dynamics of culture and society, and they recognize that people, ideas, and things have always migrated and influenced each other, eroding the idea of hard and fast boundaries around isolated cultures (Marcus 1995). The ethnographies of Richard Wilk (2006), Brad Weiss (2003), Jon Holtzman (2009), and Carole Counihan (2009), for example,

all address food and beverages in single-sited cultural contexts—Belize, Africa, and North America—and explore the internal and external influences wrought upon these places through time. Participant-observation is still the main fieldwork method, but the written accounts bring the voices of community members to the fore while addressing wider current issues and processes that impinge on people's daily lives. Culture, in these later ethnographies, becomes more messy, dynamic, and fraught with contest, disagreements, reconciliations, and strategies, and is articulated differently by members of society. Today's ethnographies explore the experiences of the fieldworker in real time, not some timeless ethnographic present, and the voices of the community members offer a dialogue with the anthropologist, making explicit how the research questions and findings are formulated. These ethnographies shed light on the daily experiences of ordinary people, how we make our living, how we make sense of our existence, and how we see our future. As intimate local stories based upon first-hand experience, they resonate globally as aspects of the shared human experience.

Participant-observation involves trying to gain an insider's, or emic, perspective on a culture and simultaneously apply an outsider's, or etic, perspective to draw wider conclusions about how the culture and society works. When working with community members, all social anthropologists work within a code of ethical practice to ensure that their participants are not compromised by the research. This involves creating agreements to protect people's rights to anonymity; to determine copyright and royalties, and fair return for assistance; and to actively involve the community in the research (American Anthropological Association 2012). Ultimately, however, the research will reflect the social anthropologist's understandings and interpretation, and will be situated within the discipline's contribution to knowledge.

Participant-observation involves everyday tasks, such as helping with food getting, preparing ingredients, cooking, cleaning—anything that is offered and asked of the fieldworker. These hands-on activities, in relation to food, are essential for learning a culinary tradition, and call upon all the fieldworker's senses to truly try to share and understand their outcome. As will be discussed in a later chapter on cooking, it is the experience of cooking, of learning the feel, smell, and **taste** of food that is essential, and similarly it is the experience of fieldwork that provides a unique opportunity to learn about culture (Adapon 2008). Fieldwork is accompanied by a wide range of other research methods, such as interviews (both informal and more focused) with as broad a cross-section of the community as possible. Part of the interviews can involve construction of kinship charts, which are helpful to understanding how social roles are played out through kinship relationships. When researching food sharing, such as meals and feasting, kinship charts help explain the allocations of tasks and the exercise of **gastro-politics**. Life histories constructed around food have proven to be an effective means of tracking how food traditions are learned and shared across generations, and how new foods are viewed and incorporated into cuisines. These insightful personal reflections on food usually bring to life the social life of food and people's engagement with it, such as memories of cooking and

eating (Counihan 1988, 2009; Macbeth and MacClancy 2004; Miller and Deutsch 2009). In addition to the commentaries of specific people, the fieldworker also listens to a community's public discourses on food. These discourses are the shared conversations broadcast across the community through intimate conversations, speeches, newspapers, radio, television, and other forms of public media. By listening to and engaging with them, individuals gain facts and specialized knowledge, which informs their understanding of the food world. The discourses surrounding food will involve the fieldworker identifying the many ways people talk about food: its cultural classification, its religious and scientific meanings, the values assigned to it, consumption rules, the identity work of social statuses associated with it, and taste preferences. All reveal how food is interpreted and its relationship to life. It is a challenge for any fieldworker to make sense of these dynamic discourses, which guide food-related decisions and are simultaneously changing and adapting to new circumstances. Slowly, through the compilation of the insiders' perspectives on food, the fieldworker will become aware of the gaps between what people say they do, the ideal constructs of their culture, and the ways in which knowledge and understanding are put into practice—the messy, lived reality of culture. This is where the insight into culture and society lies: in the understanding that comes from participating and observing, stepping within the culture, and stepping back to assess from a wider perspective. It also involves another aspect of the ethnographic method—comparison—which allows higher-level generalizations to be drawn and tested or, as Malinowski ([1922] 1966, 9) argued, brings order to what could be chaos. Comparisons can be made between different members of society (for instance, by age and gender), between different cultural or ethnic groups, between different places, and between different times. Comparison allows broader patterns and associations to be highlighted, and this will be apparent throughout this book.

An abiding principle present in the back of social anthropologists' minds as they do fieldwork, writing, and public engagement is cultural relativism. Its hallmark is objectivity, which is imperative when trying to understand cultural traditions that can be unfamiliar, and it demands a suspension of judgment while trying to ascertain what cultural practices mean to the members of a culture themselves, to understand them in that particular context. The examination of food requires that cultural relativism be maintained and the range of foodstuffs, methods of acquisition, preparation, and distribution be understood within the broader assignment of cultural meanings and values. This extends into addressing people's relationship with the environment, and their attitudes toward current and future food sources. While the act of eating meat, songbirds, sea turtles, **genetically modified** organisms, chicken nuggets, insects, and other foodstuffs can be open to the suspension of cultural relativism, depending upon the observer's biases, they must first be approached from a culturally relative position. The examination of any culture's food traditions will raise questions about access to food, denial of food, global food insecurity and anxiety, and the future consequences of intensification. All of these issues, and more, are a consequence of many processes that have now moved

far beyond the local and involve all consumers of food in the current global food system, but they must be approached objectively, from a culturally relativist standpoint; only then may an informed critique be offered. For example, a theme that is explored throughout the book is the changing nature of our relationship with food and, by extension, the natural environment. Humanity has witnessed a shift away from self-sufficient food production to a situation in which many people have become dependent consumers of food; consequently, the distance between sites of production and consumption has lengthened. This has brought about dietary change—to a new Western-style industrial cuisine—that is becoming noticeable everywhere, often characterized by a greater desire for meat, sugar, salt, and fat, catered to by the food industry and its technologically oriented use of the environment. It is important to objectively understand how this transformation occurred and what its consequences are; to examine the local responses to the globalization of food; and then to weigh up our future options. This transition has become part of the worldwide public discourse on food, sometimes addressed optimistically, in that we are capable of producing prodigious quantities of food. From a more pessimistic position, the long-term changes are taking a toll on the environment, and while we produce more food today, we are witnessing greater hunger in all societies than ever before. Through making place and time comparisons and applying cultural relativism, we are able to offer insight into the challenges we face and possible solutions to our shared need for enough healthy food. This approach highlights the importance of local responses to the global food system and their ability to reinvigorate and maintain distinct cultural identities through food, the evidence of which is drawn from a new form of fieldwork, born of our global realities.

The once standard single-sited fieldwork is increasingly augmented by multi-sited fieldwork, which attempts to capture the inclusion of world societies in the global system. This type of fieldwork, still reliant on participant-observation, examines "the circulation of cultural meanings, objects, and identities in a diffuse time-space" (Marcus 1995, 96). The travels of things across space and time have provided an opportunity to track their production and consumption, following Igor Kopytoff's (1986) method of illuminating their cultural biographies. Food biographies follow **commodity** chains and are transparent in their holistic approach, revealing how the lives of everyone along the route are linked (Bestor 2001; [2000] 2005; Barndt 2002; Cook 2004; Fischer and Benson 2006; Hergesheimer and Wittman 2012, Tsing 2015). For instance, the pioneering approach of Sidney Mintz (1985) addressed the significance of sugar in British society and located it within the political and economic expansion of the Empire. Following these ideas, the movement of ingredients and the culinary artifacts of cuisines—their representative dishes, such as curry—are an important part of this book's approach to understanding food's meaning through time and in different contexts.

Food is always locally consumed, even if it has travelled long distances to be cooked and shared. It is in these local places of consumption—from homes to restaurants—that values and meanings are given to food as part of settled people's everyday life. Food anthropologists

are interested in this intersection of the global food provisioning system with the local culinary knowledge of societies. It is where global foods come down to ground, and onto people's plates. While we all live locally, we also think, act, and imagine ourselves globally. For example, we may hear a story about Bolivians unable to afford their staple food—quinoa—and later that day, hesitate when making quinoa for supper. In our everyday acts, we are connected to distant people. This global awareness is fed by the long-distance connectivity of exchanges of goods and knowledge, and by the movement of people. Anthropologist Arjun Appadurai, beginning in the late 1980s, explored how globalization can be imagined as flows of people, ideas, and things—all interconnected, and alighting at multiple points across the world (Appadurai [1996] 2008; Inglis and Gimlin 2009). Globalization is understood as a process, a force with momentum, that touches all places and lives, triggering adaptive responses of accommodation, change, and resistance. Appadurai's concept extends Anderson's ([1983] 2006) notion of the imagined community to a global scale, whereby we imagine an extensive connection of shared lives, with everyone doing and thinking in a fashion similar to our own (Anderson 2006, 6; Appadurai 2008, 33). However, at each location people imagine the world based upon the historical, economic, political, and cultural circumstances of that locality. This useful and influential concept allows us to think through the global linkages and to look at the local manifestations of the global. By combining Marcus's call for multi-sited ethnography with Appadurai's concept of simultaneous but distinct imagining of the global system by people around the world, many insightful studies are adding to our understanding of the local culinary outcomes of the global system (Cook and Crang 1996; James 1996; Duruz 2000; Ferrero 2002; Turgeon and Pastinelli 2002; Watson [1997] 2006; Beriss and Sutton 2007).

In particular the concept of **foodscapes** captures the specific focus on the global food system: the global flows of food and cuisines as they are produced, distributed, and exchanged, and as imagined and experienced within everyone's daily lives (Ferrero 2002). Foodscapes are global in scope, including distant growers and long-distance commodity chains bringing foods into supermarkets, or migrants bringing their culinary traditions to their new homelands. They are also localized in the presence of agriculture, ingredients, dishes, stores, restaurants, and inhabitants' home cuisines in particular places. Within these culinary sites across the global landscape, people are exposed to, and engage with, foods and eating practices that are their own or those of others, all the while investing these everyday experiences with value and meaning. This book explores these processes, calling into question the prediction that globalization will homogenize the world's food culture through industrialization, standardization, and **commodification**, and instead revealing people's ability to de-commodify food and invest it with local significance. It becomes apparent that globalization is equally capable of maintaining and creating cultural and culinary diversity, because it brings about defence of the local, the revival and creation of food traditions, and the blending of old and new ideas, things, and practices (Appadurai [1996] 2008, 146; James 1996, 82; Wilk 1999, 2002, 2006). With this

brief foray into anthropological methods and theory, we can move into thinking more generally about the role of food in anyone's life, beginning with the concept of cuisine.

CUISINES

Cuisines have become prominent in the discourse surrounding the contemporary global culinary scene, and therefore any guide to food must engage with this concept and address the processes that have brought it to the fore in people's culinary imagination. Cuisines are not simply random assemblages of ingredients and characteristic flavours, but instead are long-term, largely nutritious adaptations that have supported generations through time. Nor are they merely diets, the foods habitually consumed by a population; instead, they are full of value and meaning, wrought by the environment and history, full of emotionally connective power. They are not practised only occasionally but are everyday, routine, and often unselfconscious cultural acts that are not remarked upon, unless in relation to the food and eating habits of other people. This makes cuisines a relational form of cultural marker whose relevance, rather like ethnicity itself, waxes and wanes in intensity depending upon circumstances. While cuisines may appear consistent through time, they will always change as new ingredients and ideas are incorporated, yet they offer an evocative, comforting familiarity to the habitual consumer. Cuisines act as powerful emotive forces that are at the heart of social life, having agency in shaping people and their social relationships (c.f. Farquhar [2006] 2009, 146). They are the culinary expression of any place—the culmination of the influences of the environment; the food-getting strategy; the organization of production through kinship, age, gender, and specialization; the social and political organization; **ideology**; and the circumstances of history and encounters with other cultures. A cuisine can be defined as a facet of culture concerned with ideas, beliefs, behaviours, and practices of people in relation to their creation and use of food that is socially and physically sustaining.

While this is a generalizing category, it does offer a broad pattern upon which we can explore people's culinary identity, while being mindful that the socially conscious idea of cuisine is part of the political, and economic circumstances of nationalism (Appadurai 1988; Cusack 2000). Through the years of anthropological analysis of food, the concept of cuisine, and its characteristics, has been a prominent guide to bring order to a vast array of ethnographic facts about food (Farb and Armelagos 1980, 190–91; Rozin and Rozin 1981; Goody 1982; Mintz 1985, 179; Belasco 2008, 16–20; Ray 2008). This book is no exception, with its organization hanging on the characteristics of cuisines, which are detailed in the chapters that follow.

PONDERING THE IMPONDERABILIA: AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH

Malinowski called for anthropologists to focus upon the everyday lives of individuals, and to record the "imponderabilia of actual life"—the ordinary and overlooked things we have, do, and talk about, including food. To bring the everyday relevancy of food to the fore, each chapter is accompanied by practical suggestions for applying an anthropological frame to your own food and cuisine. For instance, the book's recurring cuisine is my own—British cuisine, a deliberate choice to illustrate the usefulness of an anthropological perspective to understand an aspect of one's own culture. The question "What is British cuisine?" is a difficult one to answer, even for a member of British society. The same question posed to anyone regarding their cuisine will probably elicit a range of facts about dishes and tastes, and perhaps some expressions of what it is not, in relation to another cuisine. To help you formulate a more articulate response, this book aims to bring the general nature of cuisines to your attention; you can then fill it with your own ingredients, flavours, cooking techniques, recipes, dishes, and rules of commensality. Consequently, the case studies that focus on British cuisine, and others, provide examples of the general evidence that can be used, the questions asked, and the significance of cuisine in the wider social, economic, and political processes of everyday life identified. These serve as comparison points, against which you can bring your own cuisine into focus. This approach is autoethnography, "self-culture-writing," which applies participant-observation to one's own life, and involves reflecting on daily experiences, behaviour, practices, and traditions in relation to the broader cultural context. It is about using the frame of social anthropology to highlight your own cuisine, to interrogate the values and meanings that shape your everyday activities, relationships, and sense of identity. This autoethnographic approach will focus on specific foods and related activities in each chapter, serving as a model to think through "the imponderabilia of actual life" and derive some understanding.

The *Pondering a Foodstuff* boxes focus on particular foods, ranging from raw ingredients to specific dishes. These are served as samples or tastes of the research possibilities that surround all manner of foods, and illustrate how embedded food is in the social fabric of any cultural context. Toward this end, let's move Malinowski's ideas into the twenty-first century and make methodological use of our fondness for taking pictures with our smartphones (see **Box 0.1**, Pondering Food: Smartphone Food Record). The pictures in the book are my own and illustrate the use of photography as an important tool of fieldworkers to record the details of an ethnographic context, and often to compile a visual ethnography (Pink 2007). The practical intent of these boxes is to encourage you to find similar foodstuffs in your foodscape, take a photograph, and begin to interrogate its substance as a material thing. This will sharpen your observational skills, and prompt anthropological questions based on each chapter's terms and themes. The ordinary foodstuffs under consideration can be found in the kitchen

BOX 0.1

PONDERING FOOD: SMARTPHONE FOOD RECORD

Use your smartphone camera to document your food for a day, and let's begin to focus upon and ponder our food choices, and lend cultural and social significance, or weight, to what we often take for granted.

- *Try to honestly document what you actually eat—rather that what you think you should eat.*
- *Do this exercise after reading this introduction, and before moving further into our anthropological exploration of food.*
- *Keep a record of these pictures, and revisit them as we progress through the book.*
- *The epilogue offers to situate them in the public discourses of food.*

cupboards, refrigerators, food retailers, and restaurants of a local foodscape. The materiality of food addresses its properties—the objective, sensorially assessed physical shape, weight, colour, textures, and tastes, which together offer cues about how to handle, process, cook, and eat it. Through the experiences of using and eating foods, we assign to its properties subjective values, which become qualities that are sought after because they are appreciated for satisfying hunger and for providing preferred tastes and textures, and a range of established uses. This is how a food's cultural meanings become apparent, which allows us to place it within wider society, and to uncover its role in shaping social relations and identity. We understand ourselves through the things we consume.

The *Foodscape Grounded* boxes are suggested activities to bring a practical engagement with the book's content, with two objectives. First, these explore our embodied relationship with food. The idea of embodiment is particularly prevalent in the anthropology of food. It recognizes that our experience of the world is mediated by our bodies; through our senses, we engage with one another and with all aspects of our physical environment. Food as a substance engages with our physicality; from gathering to harvesting, from shopping to cooking, we sensorially experience its properties and qualities. For instance, cooking is an embodied skill, calling upon the cook to manipulate foods, to perform patterned tasks to make something to eat. At the level of consumption, embodiment becomes a literal reality: food is ingested, digested, and becomes part of us at a molecular level. Eating is the most profound form of consumption we engage in, which gives it deep significance through time and across cultures.

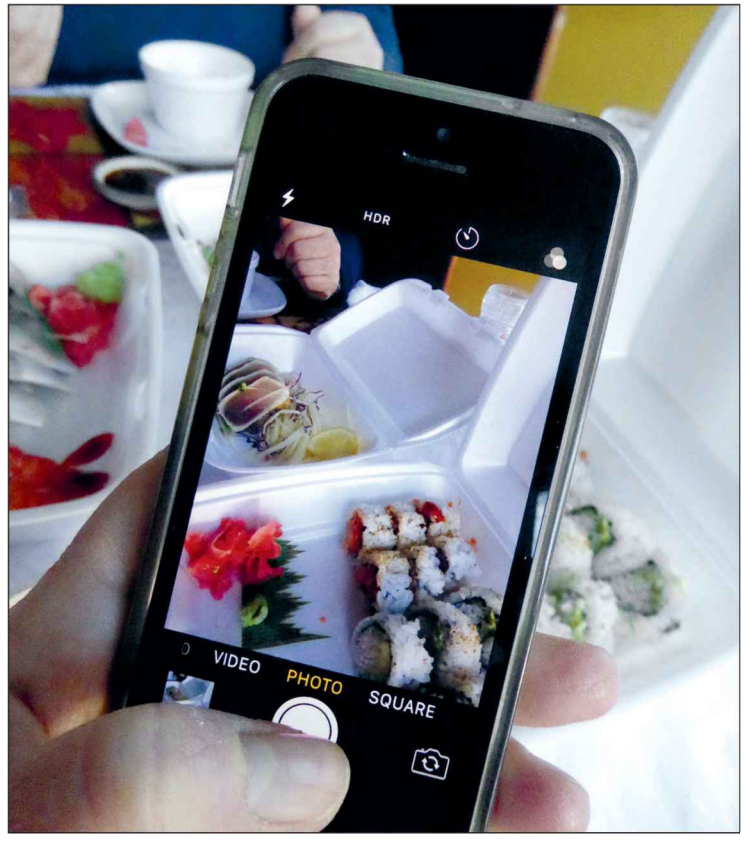


FIGURE 0.2
Foodscape: Smartphone Food Record: Framing autobiographical food has become a common food culture activity.

These exercises are a step toward understanding our embodied relationship with food. Second, some exercises take you out into the local foodscape, so that you can cultivate an awareness of the global food system's reach. This will bring home the global ramifications of our eating practices and directly engage you with public food discourses.

Each chapter ends with a short section titled *Grist for the Mill: Selected Readings*. The readings in them are offered as material that can take each chapter's themes further, with more in-depth examples, ranging from specific foodstuffs, places, methods, and current issues concerning our relationship with food. They are by no means exhaustive lists but rather a sampling of some of the rich sources available.

Our understanding of food often oscillates between the stomach and brain approaches—the "good to eat" and "good to think about." But our relationship with food is more complex

than this dichotomy suggests, and the next chapter addresses how evolution has shaped us through our need for food, both physiologically and socially, and sets the scene for exploring how we culturally construct ideas of edibility and assign **meaning and value** to food.

SELECTED READINGS

Coleman, Leo, ed. 2011. *Food: Ethnographic Encounters*. Oxford and New York: Berg. https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350042339.

To highlight the ethnographic method, and style of writing, this edited collection provides relevant grist for the anthropology food mill. The papers cover finer details of food production, shopping, and cooking, and explore issues of food security, identity work, ethical choices, colonialism, and globalization. The collection provides useful models for understanding how anthropologists work, the types of questions they pose, and the evidence that can be used to frame conclusions.

DeSoucey, Michaela. 2016. *Contested Tastes: Foie Gras and the Politics of Food*. Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400882830.

Cultural relativism is an important anthropological position, and by taking a controversial foodstuff—foie gras, fattened goose livers—DeSoucey provides a focused example. She addresses the issues surrounding foie gras from the ground up, through interviews and fieldwork, alerting the reader to the gastro-politics of eating, identity, and morality at play in food choices.

FIGURE 1.1

Olive Oil: A shelf of "superfood" olive oils at a specialty health food store.

CHAPTER ONE

OMNIVOROUSNESS

Classifying Food

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- *Explore the evolutionary influences on human diet, eating practices, and cuisines.*
- *Describe the changing nature of the* **omnivore's dilemma**.
- *Identify the cultural construction of edibility and how food conveys value and meaning.*
- *Recognize how food classifications and rules are embedded in the social order.*
- *Assess theoretical explanations for food prohibitions.*
- *Note the ideological underpinnings of public nutritional discourses.*
- *Locate the shaping of individual responsibility in dietary choices.*

INTRODUCTION

At my local health food shop, the shelves are brimming with the oldest and latest foods deemed to be beneficial for my bodily well-being. Many of the foods are classified according to certain qualities—such as being organic, natural, whole, sometimes locally produced by artisans—and others are called "functional foods" or "**nutraceuticals**." This classification system tells us a lot about how food is defined in this society, with edibility directly tied to health and ideas about "proper" nutrition. For example, a beautifully packaged can of Spanish Merula extra virgin olive oil is labelled a "superfood," proclaimed to be a "food with benefits," and widely lauded in the media as a "healthy fat," appealing to the consumer concerned with "eating properly." While many people cannot explain exactly why olive oil is good for them, the nutritional advice has been converted into a purchase (Meneley 2007). We hear from many public sources that olive oil is healthy, is versatile in cooking, tastes good, and oozes

with tradition—all of which lend meaning and additional nutritional and social value in the minds of users.

What can we make of these meanings—and associated "good" and "healthy" values—assigned to food? Why do we need to be told what to eat to make us healthy? How do we navigate our way through all the food-related advice we hear on a daily basis? Whose advice do we trust? Is there social pressure exerted upon us to follow it? To begin to answer these questions, this chapter will address how human dietary needs have evolved and been shaped by the cultural processes of classification and rule-making for organizing food consumption. This exposes the relationship between our biological selves—with needs for nutrients and energy—and our cultural selves—with our taste for specific ingredients and flavours we learn are edible and capable of sustaining life. We can recognize diets as the specific, available foods a population habitually eats, which are the basis of the cultural concept of a cuisine. The diets of individuals will be selected from available foods and shaped by personal preferences as well as sometimes the need to eat for a purpose, such as health, weight, spirituality, or morals. This begins the examination of food as serving much more than nutritional needs; instead it offers insight into the complexities of food knowledge, authority, discourse, and the social order. This is where we can see eating practices, such as religious food taboos and scientific nutritional advice, as cultural and societal guides for achieving spiritual or physical fitness, defining social groups, and making diets an ideological agenda item. Ideologies carry all the cultural assumptions shared, at some level, about the way things are and how people should behave. Conformity to, or deviation from, food rules turns eating into a complex marker of individual and group identity. This is about more than just feeding ourselves; it is about eating as part of society.

OMNIVOROUSNESS

Humans are omnivores—"all devouring"—a term that reflects our physiologic capacities to consume both meat and plant foods equally, should we choose. Omnivorousness conferred an evolutionary advantage, allowing **hominins** to be able to satisfy their nutritional needs by eating a variety of energy- and nutrient-rich food sources to maintain activity and health. It also made hominins less vulnerable than specialist eaters, allowing them to adapt to new food sources, should shortages occur. This eating pattern propelled ancestral humans into new environments, facilitating incremental migrations and continuing evolutionary adaptations around the world.

To situate human eating activity as a shared aspect of humanity, we need to make a short foray into our evolutionary history, but with a warning: this does not create an ancestral dietary plan for all humans to follow. Human evolution is a long and complex story, one that is frequently updated and renewed with more finds and theories to explain the record.

Biological anthropologists do know a great deal about human evolution, but there is debate and reassessment, and new theories that emerge. For our purposes, we are concentrating on the evolution of modern *Homo sapiens* in Africa and how this has shaped our eating practices today. The fossil record goes back millions of years, and it traces the shift to bipedalism—walking upright on two legs—and the growth of the human brain, giving rise to bigger-bodied anatomically modern humans about 200,000 years ago (Aiello and Wheeler 1995; Wrangham 2009, 85). Both of these—bipedalism and large brain size—appear to have had an influence on human dietary needs and food choices, marking the co-evolution of human physiology and food getting.

Bipedalism is the characteristic of humans, and one that differentiates us from our earlier ancestors. Gradually the human skeleton evolved to enable us to walk on two legs, involving a shift in the pelvis, the structure of the legs, feet, and curve of the spine to allow the head to balance the trunk for an erect stance. The relationship between bipedalism and dietary change is debated, but the following ideas have received considerable attention and support. Walking upright requires a great deal of energy and would have brought new demands in food acquisition, to which scavenging, and later hunting, were solutions (Aiello and Wells 2002, 332). This would have yielded high-energy animal products, such as bone marrow, but the evidence also points to the continued use of large amounts of plant foods, including sugary fruits (Aiello and Wheeler 1995; Smil 2002; Anderson 2005, 19; Ulijaszek, Mann, and Elton 2012). Bipedal mobility also brought advantageous access to dispersed, seasonally available foods, making variety an important factor in human nutrition (Ulijaszek, Mann, and Elton 2012). A drawback of bipedalism is that two legs make for less speed (although humans are good runners) and greater difficulty sleeping in trees, bringing vulnerability to attack by predators. More positively, however, the combination of danger and energy needs contributed to humans' cooperating in larger social groups (Smil 2002, 604). Further, the acquisition and use of fire brought protection from carnivores and allowed easier scavenging from their kill sites (Wrangham 2009, 183). Fire also delivered cooking, which efficiently released energy and nutrients.

Humans' cranial capacity ranges from 900 to more than 2,000 cubic centimetres (ccs), with the size having no bearing on intelligence, and it is four times larger than a chimpanzee's and five times larger than the earliest hominin fossils (Aiello and Wheeler 1995, 208). For instance, the cranial capacity of *Homo habilis*, which emerged from the earlier *Australopithecines*, was about 870–950 ccs between one and two million years ago, increasing to 1,400 ccs with the emergence of *Homo sapiens* around 200,000 years ago (Wrangham 2009, 120). It is this increase in the size of the human brain that has interested researchers: first, why did it increase, and second, how? First, to the question of why, the need to cooperate in the acquisition and sharing of food contributed to the enhanced size of the brain; it expanded in areas concerned with hand-eye coordination, language, visual and auditory recollection, and the elaboration of conscious thought, among others, and is indicative of humans' ability to

live in larger social groups, to intellectualize, weigh options, make decisions, talk, remember, and pass on the knowledge of survival to the next generation (Stein and Rowe 2000, 179–81, 461–63). Second, to the question of how, dietary change—the consumption of high-energy foods—helps explain how brain size increased. The consequence of increased brain size was this organ's own expensive energy demands.

The human brain has been described as "expensive tissue," because of its unusually high energy demands, taking about 20 per cent of an adult's energy intake (Aiello and Wheeler 1995, 207). It is hypothesized that the only way the brain could be supported was through the shortening of the gut and the eating of high-quality, easily digested foods (Aiello and Wheeler 1995, 206–7; Aiello and Wells 2002, 328). Exactly what these foods were has become a contentious issue, sometimes used to justify present-day dietary choices, such as eating meat (see **Box 8.1**, Pondering Meat). It is known that the human gut is midway between the long gut of herbivores, needed to slowly digest the leaves that comprise their diet, and the very short gut of meat-eating carnivores (Smil 2002, 605). The human gut allows for the digestion of both plant and animal foodstuffs, in a range of quantities and qualities to meet nutritional needs. The brain requires the ingestion of even higher energy-dense foods, ranging from tubers to nuts, insects to fish, and marrow to meat, but not limited to specific sources. It has been argued that the ability to store fat is a way to preserve energy to overcome seasonal fluctuations in food availability. Further, the storage of fat allows the response to lean times to be weight loss rather than the splitting up the cooperative social group (Aiello and Wells 2002, 329–30). This part of our evolutionary heritage has been interpreted as being linked to the rise of obesity around the world, which will be weighed up in chapter 8 (Brown and Sweeney 2009).

The combination of a big brain with the need for quality food further influenced human childbirth and infant care. Our large brain and small bipedal pelvis demanded the development of the brain outside the womb. Infants are born with smaller heads and a flexible cranium, which accommodates the major growth of the brain through childhood. Since the brain demands 60 to 70 per cent of an infant's energy intake, it is important to have access to a rich source of nutrition (Aiello and Wells 2002, 330). Breast milk provides the much-needed glucose for the brain, and it has been argued that the craving for sweetness and fat that continues into adult life is a legacy of this evolutionary history (Mintz 1985, xxviii, 14–16; Rozin 2000; Pollan 2007). Human infants are especially vulnerable and continue to have slow body growth, to allow for the brain's growth, until adolescence. Parental protective care for infants and children over the span of years, probably also by grandparents and other adults, furthered the success of cooperative social groups. Kinship systems, and the creation of families, allowed for these ties to be organized as a part of cultural practices. After weaning, the availability of easily digested, high-quality cooked food would also have been important for childhood growth (Aiello and Wells 2002, 330, 334; Wrangham 2009, 180), with both children and the elderly remaining especially vulnerable to food shortages such as famines.

The human dentition, which begins the digestive process, further enhanced the acquisition of energy and nutrients (Aiello and Wheeler 1995; Wrangham 2009). The human jaw and teeth have reduced in size since the ancestral past. It is speculated that these changes occurred as humans became tool users and their diet shifted to include more animal products. The teeth—comprised of molars for grinding, incisors and canines for biting—are consistent with a mixed diet of animal and plant materials. Tool use is facilitated by our opposable fingers and thumbs, and while it is not unique to humans, it allows for the fine, precise manipulation of objects and tools. In relation to food acquisition, selection, processing, and eating—with our hands or using utensils—our hands are an important aspect of food traditions. Most, if not all, early human artifacts that litter the archaeological record are tools associated with food acquisition and processing, and these have been used to chart the changes in our cultural evolution. The specific types of food-getting practices are explored in chapters 2 and 3. Cooking, the focus of chapters 4 and 5, is a central cultural activity, part of our adaptive strategy, and it has been argued that it significantly shaped our physiologic and social evolution. Wrangham (2009, 89), who defines humans as "cookivores," claims we "do not eat cooked food because we have the right kind of teeth and guts; rather, we have small teeth and short guts as a result of adapting to a cooked diet." From this perspective, modern humans emerged because we cooked food, making energy and nutrients digestible and available, to support bipedalism and a larger brain. This moves away from determining an exact diet for humans, and toward our need for variety and a range of quantities and qualities of foods capable of meeting energy and nutritional needs.

THE OMNIVORE'S DILEMMA

Omnivorousness does not mean indiscriminate eating; instead it implies eating a wide range of foodstuffs, thereby acquiring sufficient energy and nutrients. In evolutionary history, omnivorousness presumably demanded a trial-and-error process, guided by the senses, to determine any food's edibility. Our senses are our evolutionary equipment, allowing appearance, taste, and texture to play a vital role in determining edibility. Vision, smell and touch can determine ripeness, for instance, and our tongues are covered with taste buds, which work in conjunction with smell, to enable us to identify flavours of sweetness, saltiness, bitterness, sourness, and umami (savouriness) (Anderson 2005, 70–71; Bartoshuk and Duffy 2007, 27). As mentioned, sweetness and the mouth-feel of fat appear to be valued, indicating quick energy, while bitterness can bring avoidance of foods that are possibly toxic (Mintz 1985; Rozin 1997). These sensory capacities offer openness to new foods—neophilia, encouraging the omnivore to eat widely; but this is tempered by a cautionary neophobia—the fear that unknown foods may be harmful. Ultimately, however, we do not instinctively know what we should eat—we cannot

smell nutrients—but we can taste for energy sources, and somehow human biological needs were translated onto the surrounding plant and animal food sources. This translation from discernable qualities of food to the hidden nutrients necessary for energy, and cell growth and repair has often been presented as causing a dilemma—what to eat? The term "omnivore's dilemma" was coined in the 1970s by Paul Rozin, who researched the psychology of food choices (Rozin and Rozin 1981; Rozin 1997; Rozin 2000, 148–79). He went on to examine the solution to the dilemma as the interplay between three sources of information or experience: first, biological heritage—omnivorousness, ancestry, and individual genes, such as the quantity of taste buds; second, unique individual experiences—such as a lifelong dislike of shellfish after one bad oyster; and third, culture—mediated by age, gender, and social standing. It is this last area—culture—that has proven to be humans' evolutionary advantage. The capacity to remember the appearance and taste of edible foods was important. This included remembering the availability of food species and strategizing future access. This practical knowledge culminated in named classifications, adding value, conferring meaning, and shaping rules about when and how to eat. Human sociability meant that this complex knowledge was passed on, allowing children to learn to eat culturally edible food, inscribing its tastes and textures into their memories, adding a sensory dimension to their identity. Collectively, omnivores across the globe solved their dilemmas in their respective environments, with solutions articulated as food classifications and rules, which lessened neophobia. The criteria used to evaluate and classify foods and flavours, and give them meaning, varies from one culture to another, but our common human experience is that our senses act together to identify familiar foods that can provide a life-sustaining diet.

One perceptive nineteenth-century food writer, Brillat-Savarin ([1825] 2009, 59–65), argued that our omnivorous tastes "naturally" led humans to become gastronomes, interested in food, and in its capacity to bring pleasure, sociability, and health. He celebrated humanity's cultivation of gastronomic tastes and culinary traditions as the pinnacle of biological and social evolutionary history. From this perspective, the solutions to the omnivore's dilemma are the world's cuisines, often represented as stable, successful edible choices that have supported viable populations for generations (Pollan 2007, 295–96; Armelagos 2010).

FOOD CLASSIFICATIONS AND RULES

Food classifications are an intellectual, linguistic, and behavioural framework of categories into which different foods are placed, and assigned value and meaning, based on their ability to satisfy various social, religious, economic, political, and nutritional needs. They are culturally constructed **folk taxonomies**, full of complex ideological significances, rooted in cosmologies. Any form of classification rests on some form of criteria used to evaluate placement in a meaningful scheme,

and this may reject otherwise edible foods. The omnivore's sensory capacities would have begun the objective assessment of edibility: the appearance, feel, texture, and taste of a species' properties. Once cultural edibility is determined, the discernable properties of the food, those characteristics that are always present, will be given subjective cultural meanings, turning them into qualities—such as offering physical and emotional satisfaction, preservability for storage, and versatility in cooking. This adds value to foods, reflecting the capacity of food to be "good" or "bad" at accomplishing physical and social outcomes: ending hunger, conferring health, and supporting family. The assigned values transform foods into staples and luxuries, for instance, and create a hierarchy of social uses. The social uses are patterned by a culture's social order, which is based on the power relations between statuses, including gender and age. This order can be relatively horizontal, or egalitarian, or exhibit a distinctly vertical hierarchy, as in stratified societies with classes and castes. The social life of food involves transactions of correctly valued foods between people to communicate their relative positions in the social order (gastro-politics). The classification of foods, and their social uses, parallels the classification of people, and their relationships with one another. Furthermore, hidden properties of food—humours and nutrients (as discussed later)—also become important for classifying foods, adding deeper metaphysical and scientific values and meanings.

As new foods are encountered, these will be incorporated, or rejected, within the existing classification system, and rules will shape the use of the new substances (more on making sense of new foods in later chapters). The rules guide practical and social behaviours—cooking and eating, for instance—and are unconsciously followed as just the way we do things. These are normative rules, a cultural pattern of used foods, with their values and meanings serving to evaluate people's conformity within the social order (Counihan 1992). Shared consumption can bring a sense of shared cultural identity, and social differentiation can occur based on eating low- and high-status edibles. Here, identification with and through, food becomes apparent, and draws attention to the ease of extending an evaluation of another's food into an evaluation of the person, their relative social position, and maybe their culture. Adherence to food rules turns eating into an act that is open to social and moral judgments, reinforcing the order of society.

All types of societies, whether composed of smaller or larger numbers of people, use food classifications and rules. As an illustrative example, the egalitarian hunter-gatherer Andamanese classified food according to the effort involved in its acquisition. The most prestigious foods were those rare and dangerous to catch, such as the dugong, while the most easily gathered, such as shellfish, were less valued, only to be eaten when there was nothing else (Radcliffe-Brown [1922] 1964, 269). Radcliffe-Brown, who conducted fieldwork on the Andaman Islands in the Bay of Bengal, noted it was the social value of food that was most important, "the way in which that thing affects or is capable of affecting the social life" (264). When someone successfully hunted prestigious food, they were expected to follow the appropriate rules of behaviour—to be generous and to share, thereby reinforcing the egalitarian ethos of society (275).

As a form of collective knowledge, food classifications and rules, like those of the Andaman Islanders, can be understood as the tried and tested cuisine of ancestors, who solved the omnivore's dilemma, elaborated on the solution, and passed it on to their descendants. Through the informal experiences and formal learning of enculturation, members of society learn what to eat to satisfy their biological and cultural needs. It is with this in mind that cuisines can be examined as evidence of local culinary knowledge based upon a long-term relationship with an environment's range of food sources. The lifelong process of eating with others, beginning in infancy, socializes people and transforms food rules into the norms of everyday practices. Food rules receive further legitimacy through the actions of specialists, who are socially acknowledged as having authoritative knowledge about food. Andamanese ritual specialists, whose authority rested in religious beliefs, were central to the transmission of food knowledge and practices. In the Andamanese **cosmology**, the lives of humans and animals were intertwined, with myths detailing the origins of humans as survivors of a flood, and animals as the humans who perished. This relationship demanded that food species must be respected

FIGURE 1.2
Muttonbirds for Sale in New Zealand. The enculturation of taste makes these desired birds for the Māori but unpalatable for mainstream New Zealanders.

through specific rituals carried out while processing the food. Cooking became a medium for transforming the animal to the status of edible food, and it had to be performed correctly to avoid harm (Carter 1996, 28). Furthermore, all Andamanese went through puberty rites of passage that reinforced the ritual etiquette of processing and cooking the most dangerous major foods—dugong, turtle, pig, and honey—with initiates being subjected to ritualized killing, bleeding, jointing, stuffing, and cooking, while they abstained from eating the food they represented. In this liminal state, the deeper meanings and values of the food were impressed upon the emotionally receptive initiates, making any future deviation a moral transgression of fundamental cosmological ideas about the world (Radcliffe-Brown [1922] 1964, 278).

The specialists of dietary and culinary advice range from mothers to marketers, shamans to clerics, doctors to celebrities, and bureaucrats to gourmets, all of whom use their authority to convince people to follow their rules. These are the voices heard while deciding what to eat, and are part of the ongoing public food discourse, airing old and new advice, engaging in wider ideological discussions about food, and shaping norms to be followed. This discourse strengthens the evaluative criteria for determining how well one's own, and others', food consumption matches the received wisdom of how to eat properly.

Food Prohibitions

All cultures' food classifications include foods that are categorized as inedible and forbidden as food. Surrounded by rules, forbidden foods maintain the order of the classificatory system, ensuring that categorical meanings and values are upheld. Culturally defined inedibility requires meanings that devalue the substance as food, making it unthinkable as a consumable. Prohibitions can mark foods as polluted, unsafe, unclean, unfit to be eaten, while others are conversely marked as pure, safe, clean, and fit to be eaten. The justifications for prohibitions can be derived from many sources, including religion and science, and are concerned with issues of morality, hygiene, health, and legality. Prohibitions based upon religious beliefs are often described as dietary taboos, and probably the most widely known are those found in Judaism and Islam. Islamic dietary taboos forbid the consumption of blood, pork, and any meat that is *haram*. *Haram*, or forbidden meat, comes from animals slaughtered by a non-Muslim, while *halal* meat is made permissible by a Muslim following the Qur'an's method of killing and reciting a prayer (Suras 5:3, 6:118, 16:116).

In the Judeo-Christian belief system, the "first disobedience" was the consumption of the fruit of the tree of knowledge by Eve and Adam in the Garden of Eden. This fruit's exact identity is not certain, but it's often portrayed as an apple. This sacred narrative tells of the negative consequences of the fruit's consumption as mortality, hardship, the struggle for food, and painful childbirth. In this tradition, humans were originally vegetarians (Genesis 1:29–30), and then after Noah's rescue of life on earth, God gave humans animals as meat (Genesis 9:3–4)—but with

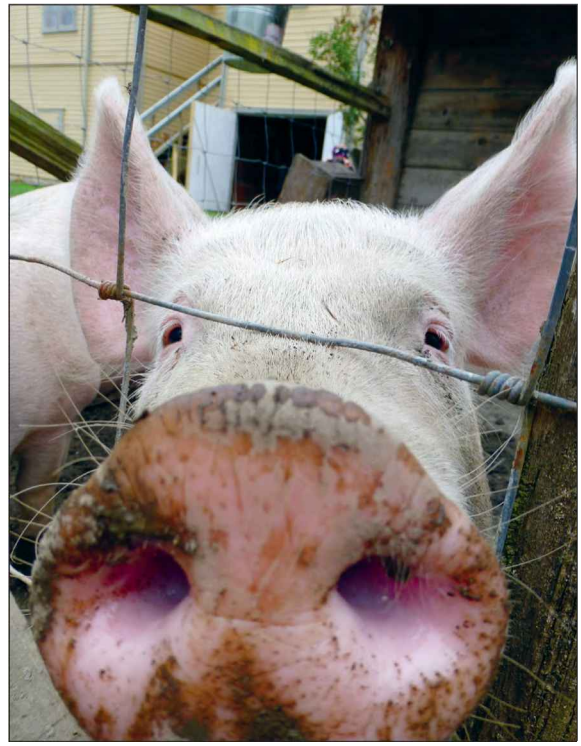


FIGURE 1.3

Piggy Life: Outdoor lives of pigs showcased at a rural life museum in British Columbia. The physical characteristics and environmental needs of these domesticated animals have been filtered through the religious and economic ideas of many cultures, which have had a lasting influence on their lives.

taboos attached (Leviticus 11, Deuteronomy 14). Judaism's complex food rules, collectively known as *kashrut*, include ritually sanctioned slaughtering, and separate cooking for milk (source of life) and meat (lifeless substance). These rules transform food into sanctioned edibles, designated as *kosher*, and guide eating traditions. Dietary taboos are enshrined in both oral mythological traditions and in sacred textual traditions, and as such they carry the weight of religious legitimacy and are often overseen by religious specialists. When taboos are publicly followed, they mark membership in the religion and extend religiosity into the everyday act of eating.

The strength of any prohibition rests upon a perceived consequence for disobedience, whether spiritual or biological—damnation or illness, for instance. Indeed, many contemporary diets—as in a specified regimen of eating for weight-loss or health—prohibit foods that will detract from the dieters' goals. Individuals are responsible for obeying the food prohibitions and avoiding the tabooed foods. Yet, there are circumstances that can temporarily suspend

prohibitions, and involve rules for breaking the rules, thus preserving the overall integrity of the system. Muslims, for example, are permitted to eat *haram* meat if they face starvation. Similarly, many dieters work on a system of treats and rewards, justifying the consumption of forbidden foods, for instance, by the attainment of a specific goal (see **Box 1.1**, Pondering Sugar).

To return to the Jewish dietary rules—*kashrut*—the work of Mary Douglas ([1966] 2000) explored how people think about their world, with food and eating just one dimension of the cultural patterns people use to organize themselves and others. She examined the food classification and rules found in the Old Testament books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy, previously mentioned, which list the creatures that can be eaten, including the ox, the sheep, and the goat—those that "parts the hoof and is cloven-footed and chews the cud." The unclean creatures that may not be eaten include the camel, the hare, and swine, the latter because "it parts the hoof and is cloven-footed but does not chew the cud" (42–43). The taboos, Douglas explains, rest on animals' characteristics that confound the cultural categories; they are anomalous, outside the God-given moral order of the world, and are to be avoided. She contends that the biblical classification of the world represents the cognitive categories of pastoral Jewish culture, and anything that transgresses those is dangerous to the existence of society (5). As she concludes, "The dietary laws would have been like signs which at every turn inspired meditation on the oneness, purity and completeness of God. By rules of avoidance holiness was given a physical expression in every encounter with the animal kingdom and at every meal" (58). Here we see food rules organizing eating as part of daily social relationships within a community defined by its religious beliefs.

Another widely known dietary prohibition is the Hindus' taboo against eating beef. This is part of the Hindu practice of non-violence, or *ahimsa*, which extends to other animals as well as cattle, and privileges vegetarianism as a religious act. Hindu beliefs in *samsara*, the cycle of a soul's reincarnation through successive life forms, add weight to the consequences of eating animal species. Furthermore, cows feature in the sacred texts of Hinduism, including the *Rigveda*, with gods taking a bovine form, providing a religious justification for their worship. Except for the meat, cow products—milk, butter, and cheese curd—are all important in religious rituals, as offerings to the gods. Consequently, many regions of India prohibit the slaughter of cattle, and an estimated 80 million of these sacred animals are allowed to wander freely through cities and agricultural land (Shiva 2000, 58). While the Hindu dietary taboo and the veneration of cattle can be understood in religious terms, it has also been explored as an ecological adaptation. In a cost-benefit analysis, anthropologist Marvin Harris ([1974] 1989, 21) argued that cows are low-cost and high-benefit contributors to India's agricultural communities. The cattle can be used for ploughing and milk production, and they provide manure for agriculture and fuel (58). The sacredness of the taboo reinforces the ecological importance of keeping cattle alive rather than slaughtering them for food. As Harris says, "The sense of unutterable profanity elicited by cow slaughter has its roots in the excruciating contradiction

BOX 1.1:
PONDERING SUGAR: A PREFERRED PATHOGEN?

In the kitchen, in a helpfully labelled canister, is a quantity of sugar. The properties of sugar are rather minimal, at first glance. It is a white, crystalline substance, a refined substance, with no obvious impurities and no clues about its source: What it is made from? Its physical characteristics suggest an enormous versatility of uses: it can be sprinkled, added, dissolved, and melted, used as a sweet additive in household cooking and preserving. Its major quality is sensory: sweetness. Sugar's value lies in its capacity to sweeten.

This chapter frames sugar from an evolutionary perspective, as a taste that provided reassurance of a food's safety, and a boost of energy. Sweetness helped the omnivore solve the dilemma of what to eat.

But there's more to this innocent-looking white substance. While it's valued for sweetness, its meanings extend far beyond this taste. This is a kitchen staple that has come under intense scrutiny. The public nutritional discourse has got its teeth into sugar, with the World Health Organization issuing warnings about eating too much of it. This taste preference is part of our nature, and yet how much we consume, in what form, and with what level of sweetness is left to nurture, to culture, to determine (Mintz 1985; Messer 1986).

This household sugar is a human invention, made by crushing sweet cane or beets and refining the extract into a crystallized form. Materialized sugar—or sucrose—is a chemical, a disaccharide, composed of glucose and fructose. This invisible essence of sugar was identified by nutritional science's exploration of foodstuffs at the molecular level. Now we know where sweetness, as a taste, comes from—the chemical source of our pleasure. Furthermore, it is argued that sweetness affects the brain's reward centre and is capable of triggering an addictive "bliss point" that will be sought again. This has led sugar to be regarded as an addictive drug-food, implicated in tooth decay, weight gain and obesity, insulin resistance, and non-communicable diseases (NCDs) (Mintz 1985, 99–100).

Sugar is hidden in processed foods and unwittingly consumed by many in developed and developing countries, which has led to our sugar intake surpassing our dietary needs and becoming a pathogen implicated in an epidemic that is annually killing more people than either of the world wars. Could sugar become tabooed? Reclassified as a prohibited food? How can its value and meanings be changed? What cosmological authority could enforce the taboo?

FIGURE 1.4

Bags of Sugar: Britons, on average, consume over 22 teaspoons of sugar per day; the World Health Organization recommends that sugar constitute less than 5 per cent of calorific intake (5–6 teaspoons).

between immediate needs and long-run conditions of survival. Cow love," he says, "with its sacred symbols and holy doctrines" reinforces the ecological benefits of keeping cattle rather than slaughtering them for the short-term gain of food. The cattle, for Harris, are not "good to eat" because they provide more—milk, dung, and labour—when kept alive (21). Harris's reduction of religious meanings to an ecological imperative has garnered criticism, particularly because it largely ignores Hindus' own understanding of their practices. Indeed, many farmers find the cattle a nuisance, rather than Harris's ecological miracle (Simoons et al. 1979).

Douglas and Harris have different starting points to explain dietary taboos; Harris begins with the environmental, the material basis of existence, while Douglas begins with the intellectual processes of cultural classification and its ordering of the world. These could be contrasted as a "stomachs first" versus a "minds first" approach; eating enables thought or thoughts enable eating. Both lines of reasoning have qualities to commend them, but ultimately food classifications—placement into ordered, evaluative and meaningful categories, surrounded by rules to encourage or forbid consumption—can never be isolated from the rest of a people's way of life; they are all intimately tied together into a dynamically adaptive tradition. It would therefore be difficult to isolate one or even two explanations why some foods were accepted or rejected. As Marshall Sahlins noted, the inherent properties of foods can be culturally overlooked. He considered why in North America dogs are unthinkable as food while cattle are happily consumed. This, he argues, is entirely subjective and part of the culture's symbolic

system that assigns value and meaning to dogs as pets and cattle as food. Both are quite capable of satisfying a material need—but one is selected over the other, a process that reveals the hierarchy of value ascribed to different species. Furthermore, the classification of beef, with higher social significance ascribed to steaks than "lesser" cuts, reflects the class system (Sahlins 1976, 170–76). What is apparent is that all cultures tell themselves "This is what we eat" and "This is what we shouldn't eat," and why. This is where the public discussion of food is so significant to understanding how food is given meaning and value, which is then articulated with people's sense of cultural identity, health, and basic relationship with the food they eat.

EATING FOR HEALTH: WHOSE RULES? WHOSE AUTHORITY?

As mentioned, food classifications hinge on placing foods into meaningful categories, assigning value, and organizing eating to reflect the social order. The constant, discernable properties of foods—colour, shape, and taste—contribute to people's recognition and classification of foods, and organize their knowledge of how to use and eat them. For example, we recognize an apple and classify it as a fruit; we know that it tastes sweetish, that it is "good" for us and capable of satisfying hunger, and that "one a day will keep the doctor away." Therefore, we conclude, it is a healthy food. As this example indicates, food classifications also employ imperceptible substances, such as humours and nutrients, essences that affect the body. These can account for health, illness, emotional stability, and in some systems of thought, personality types. While the knowledge of the biochemical nutrients of food is a relatively recent discovery, the humoral system of classifying foods is one of the oldest and most extensive. It began the association between food and medicine that is evident in today's nutritional science designations as "nutraceuticals" and "superfoods." These deeper values and meanings of food rest upon systems of authority, which lend legitimacy and social weight to the knowledge, commanding respect and obedience to the rules. The hidden qualities of foods require specialists to discern their relative values and recommend consumption patterns to bring or restore health. The authority is furnished through religious and scientific cosmologies, which relegate power to supernatural or natural beings and forces. Two important systems of eating for health are explored in the following section: Indian Ayurvedic rules and secular states' nutrition guides.

Humoral Classifications: India

The knowledge of humours was diffused across the globe from ancient India, through the ancient world of the Mediterranean, Middle East, North Africa, and Northern Europe, and later into the Americas with the spread of colonialism. In each place, humoral knowledge became syncretized with existing systems of thought, achieving new cultural meanings in

each respective context (Anderson 1988, 323; 2005, 140–43; Estes 2000; Grivetti 2000, 1507). Evidence of its presence is found in many of the world's cuisines, and while the humoral meanings may have receded, the combinations of flavours, textures, and temperatures have often remained. For example, the tasty Italian combination of salty, dry, Parma ham with moist, sweet melon was brought together following humoral rules to eat opposites, determined by temperature and moisture. This reminds us of the continuing importance of the sensory properties of food, which are given qualitative value and cultural meaning, even as their hidden essences are exposed: very tasty, Italian antipasto, humours balanced, good food.

Indian cuisine is a good example of the humoral foundation of a culinary tradition, which references hidden essences within foods that affect the body. Indian food reaches into ideas about physical and spiritual health, and practices of worship, and is played out in the social life of the caste system. In reality, India's Hindu religion, society, and cuisine are complex and regionally diverse, defying singularization as *a* religion, *a* society, or *a* cuisine. However, by way of introduction, this simplified synopsis can serve as a taster, hinting at the true complexity. Food and eating in Hinduism are situated within the dual concepts of "You are what you eat" and "You eat what you are." The former addresses eating properly to bring spiritual and physical rewards, tying food consumption to religion and health. The latter addresses the cosmological belief that people and foods are assigned to specific types or dispositions, *gunas*, tying food choices to personality types. This Ayurvedic ("knowledge [or science] of life") humoral system centres upon five cosmic elements—earth, water, fire, air, and ether—which are variously combined as three *doshas*: *Vatha*, wind; *Kapha*, phlegm; and *Pitta*, bile (see **Table 1.1**). These have bodily locations, which influence a person's attitudes, behaviour, and morals and are affected by the types of food consumed. As food is digested, it is converted into essences and turned into six bodily tissues or *dhatu* —blood, flesh, fat, bone, marrow, and semen—as well as polluting waste—urine and feces, sweat, nails, and hair. Foods, *doshas*, *dhatus*, and waste products must be balanced, and if they are not, then illness and emotional instability will result (Rao 1986, 135–36). The earliest dietary injunctions are found in Indian sacred texts dating back to the sixth century BCE, such as the *Charaka Samhita*, which states, "Without a proper diet, medicines are of no use: with a proper diet, medicines are unnecessary" (Achaya 1998, 87). The Ayurvedic system places diet as the most important means to achieve the harmonious well-being of body, mind, and spirit, within the wider caste-based social order of a stratified society. This classification reflects the society's social order, and cosmic authority demands conformity to the rules.

India's stratified social order, given legitimacy by sacred texts, divides Hindus into four main castes or *varnas*—*Brahmins*, *Kshatriyas*, *Vaisyas*, and *Sudras*—which can also be understood as another form of folk taxonomy. A fifth non-caste, or outcaste group, also exists: the Untouchables, called *Harijans* or *Dalits*. Each caste is subdivided into hundreds of smaller sub-castes or *jatis*. A person inherits their caste at birth, and it cannot be changed in this lifetime. However, by following the caste and cosmic rules or *dharma* (which include diet), they

TABLE 1.1 Ayurvedic Classifications

Five elements	Combined to create three *doshas*	Combined with *dhatus*	Correspond with three *gunas* or personality attributes	Correspond with different food types
Earth	Kapha—earth and water	Blood	Slothful, dull, lethargic, and ignorant	Tamasic—cold, stale, highly spiced; making the eater dull and slothful
Water	phlegm	Flesh		
		Fat		
		Bone		
		Marrow		
		Semen		
Fire	Vatha—air and ether		Lucid, pure, and dispassionate	Sattvic—savoury, nutritive; bringing serenity and spirituality
Air	Wind			
	Pitta—fire		Passionate, restless, and energetic	Rajasic—hot, bitter, sour, dry, and burning; bringing restlessness
Ether	Bile			

Source: adapted from Achaya 1998, 77–81; Sen 2015, 111–12, 117–21.

can gain *karma*, cosmic merit, allowing for rebirth in a higher caste in the next life. Within this system, people and their behaviours are organized according to ideas of purity and pollution, higher castes being most pure and lower ones, especially the *Dalits*, being the most polluted. While the caste system in India today does not operate as strictly as in the past, the principles of purity and pollution are still in effect. Purity is derived from proximity to the sacred cosmos, source of the supernatural, and is ascribed by birth and achieved by practices, such as ritual worship and eating. Pollution comes from exposure to the baser bodily emissions of organic life, human and non-human. Affecting both people and food, pollution moves up the caste system, and purity moves downwards. *Brahmins*, for example, will often follow a vegetarian diet, regarded as superior to eating meat, while *Kshatriyas* embrace meat for its passions—anger and lust (Dumont 1980, 147). A balanced dietary regimen is expected, beginning with balancing hot and cold and eating seasonal, local foods. The precise classification varies between regions in India, and foods can move from one category to another depending upon how they are processed or cooked. In general, hot foods include spices, chicken, and chilies, while cold foods include rice, fruits, and dairy products. Meals are supposed to include a balance of hot and cold, and all six major tastes: hot tastes (pungent, acidic, and salty) and cold tastes (sweet, astringent, and bitter). They are also to include textural variety with foods that can be licked, sucked, chewed, and drunk (Achaya 2000, 46–47; Collingham 2006, 7–8).

This is a very complex system, and its reduction to a grid does not do justice to its complexities, nor the ability of such systems to be flexibly interpreted in different circumstances.

Through careful and moderate intake of food, following the hot and cold classifications and according to each person's dietary type (see above), bodily balance will be attained. For instance, balanced bile brings contentment and good digestion; balanced phlegm brings emotional stability and stamina; and balanced wind results in vitality and creativity (Achaya 1998, 77). These notions still heavily influence today's Indian cuisines, and they form the basis of the sensory culinary aesthetics, with people attaining health through their dietary choices (Pant 2010). For some, the Ayurvedic principles have become so ingrained they are often overlooked in everyday eating, while for others they offer a more conscious set of dietary rules to control health. The legitimacy of these culinary practices rests in "tradition" and habitual practice, and in the hands of cooks and religious specialists. As the anthropologist Ravindra S. Khare (2007, 156) notes, the ability of food in India to be so central to the culture's communication, signification, philosophy, experience, and systematization of life means it must be described as "gastrosemantics"—eating for meaning (164*n1*).

Nutritional Classifications

In Europe, another humoral system classified all organisms as a combination of two qualities: temperature (hot or cold) and moisture (wet or dry). These aligned with the colours of bodily fluids (blood, yellow bile, white phlegm, and black bile) and by personality traits (sanguine, choleric, phlegmatic, and melancholy). Consumption rules brought balance through combinations of food, to restore health and nourish people. Specialists and physicians recommended diets and disseminated the knowledge through dietary cookbooks. By the late 1500s, the beginnings of experimental science systematically explored the hidden essences of foods, moving beyond the humoral system and into the molecular. Gradually, knowledge about the inner workings of the body expanded, with ideas about the speed of the pulse, and the role and composition of gastric juices, becoming fused with humoral ideas (Estes 2000, 1538). Food took on a different classification from this point onward, becoming reducible to chemical compounds and calories. These were recognized as the basis of a healthy diet, suited to the energy and nutrient needs of humans anywhere. The contributions of Justus von Liebig, and later Wilbur Atwater (Wrangham 2009, 197–200), finalized the nutritional classification of food as macronutrients (protein, fat, and carbohydrates) and micronutrients (such as vitamins), together with the calorific values of each foodstuff. The meaning of food in this classification system is located at the molecular level, and a food's value is determined by its contribution to the body's energy and nutrient needs. This, however, is not a straightforward connection. For instance, the concept of healthiness has changed through time, as witnessed by the shifts in the norms of body shape and size, and the fluctuations in advice about what to eat: more

of a particular food, and then less of the same food (Nestle 2007). This could be regarded as a folk taxonomy, but its legitimacy lies in science and experimentation rather than religion and faith, and it is presented as transcending cultural differences by appealing to humanity's shared evolutionary dietary needs. Nutritional science is still researching and learning more about the complexities of food and its relationship with our bodies' needs for calories and nutrients to provide energy, cell growth, and cell repair. This far-reaching nutritional classification system identifies the nutritional components of food essential to a healthy life—in the short term for each individual, and in the long term for the entire population. However, unlike the humoral classifications, the nutritional system does not offer food rules that correspond to existing culinary traditions; instead, the rules are removed from culture, located in our hidden biological needs, and overlook the emotional effects of food. This knowledge has become particularly prominent in global public discourse surrounding **food security**—issues of malnutrition from too little and too much food—turning nutritional guidelines into an official tool to tackle dietary problems. However, to make this knowledge successful, the challenge becomes how to integrate it into people's social and cultural relationship with food. Furthermore, each system—humoral and nutritional—is based on culturally legitimate authority, but ultimate responsibility rests with individuals' level of trust and willingness to follow the rules.

REDUX OMNIVORE'S DILEMMA: TOO MANY RULES, TOO MUCH FOOD?

In the twenty-first century, we are again hearing about the omnivore's dilemma as a product of contemporary food choices. This, it must be noted, is a singular omnivore, in keeping with the individualism of modernity, solely responsible for their food choices. The dilemma is now played out as part of **gastro-anomie**, arising from the disintegration of cuisines and the limited transmission of culinary knowledge apparently being experienced within Western industrial societies. Latter-day omnivores, it is argued, have lost their guiding rules, which leaves them unable to make wise food choices and results in rising rates of dietary-related NCDs, such as cardiovascular diseases (heart attacks and strokes), cancer, and diabetes (Fischler 2000; Pollan 2007, 2008, 2009; Gallegos 2009; World Health Organization 2008). These are diseases of malnutrition: too much food, rather than too little. It is still the old question of what to eat, and how to choose, but it is now posed within a vast array of commercial food choices. If these foods are all equally edible, why is malnutrition a global problem? How do we select, and what can guide us in making wise decisions to satisfy our hunger and keep us healthy, without exposing us to harm? We still have the same sensory capacities, and these are now augmented by many sources of nutritional, culinary, gastronomic, and environmental advice. This redux dilemma, it is argued, speaks to an uncoupling of food from the received culinary knowledge of past generations, and to the presence of too many competing voices giving many solutions (Pollan 2007). The dilemma

becomes this: Whose advice do I listen to when deciding what I should eat? This question does not speak to a lack of rules, rather that there are too many. It begs further questions: Do we really suffer from gastro-anomie—normless, meaningless eating? Or are we the epitome of Brillat-Savarin's gastronomes, living at a time when food has become so packed with meaning—culturally, socially, politically, economically, and healthfully—that individuals construct their own solutions to the dilemma? Has modernity made the omnivore's solution the responsibility of individuals, requiring that they assess the information and construct food rules that work within the demands of an urbanized life? These questions can be situated in two areas of dietary advice provided in society: state nutritional guides, and do-it-yourself diets selected from the public domain. The authority of the former rests in nutritional science and the secular power of the state, while the latter are more diffuse, eclectic, and sometimes questionable.

State Dietary Guides

Nutritional science has brought a new understanding of the foods people need in order to be healthy. State dietary guides are intended to inform citizens about what to eat, and how to enjoy good health so as to be productive members of society. As government documents, these are concerned with wider ideological agendas toward the buoyancy of the economy, defending national interests and policies to keep order in society. For instance, states are involved in the provision of food through agricultural policies, subsidies, export and import controls, health and safety measures, and the societal infrastructure for its production, distribution, and retailing to reach citizen consumers. A state is thus directly responsible for the availability and access to quantities of quality foods that will support a healthy population. In Europe and North America, this has been a long-term endeavour, with centuries of laws passed to regulate weights and measures, distribute foods, and limit consumption of dangerous foods, such as alcohol. The adulteration of foods with toxic substances has been a long-term problem, particularly poisoning and cheating the urban, working poor. Food security became a national interest, and states needed to provide more protection from fraudulent goods, and to actively monitor citizens' health (Helstosky 2000, 1557; Freidberg 2004; Wilson 2008). The provision of state health care depends upon differing political ideologies, but dietary guides and domestic science have been widely embraced to provide the necessary knowledge. From an economic viewpoint, the health of workers is important to national interests, as is the success of the food industry, which will provide commercial dietary choices. Furthermore, healthy citizens have been needed to defend many states' nationalist aspirations, which brought nutrition into the purview of the military. State armies organized soldiers' rations to build up their fighting fitness, while food supplies to civilians were rationed to reduce consumption and conserve food supplies (Mennell 1996, 230; Helstosky 2000; Shapiro [1986] 2009; Cwiertka 2006). Indeed, World War II rationing has been credited with making postwar populations healthier—both

Nutrition Facts
Valeur nutritive
Per 1/2 cup (125 mL)
par 1/2 tasse (125 mL)
Amount
Teneur
% Daily Value
% valeur quotidienne
Calories / Calories 20
Fat / Lipides 0 g 0 %
Saturated / saturés 0 g + Trans / trans 0 g 0 %
Cholesterol / Cholestérol 0 mg
Sodium / Sodium 0 mg 0 %
Carbohydrate / Glucides 4 g 1 %
Fibre / Fibres 2 g 8 %
Sugars / Sucres 3 g
Protein / Protéines 1 g
Vitamin A / Vitamine A 6 %
Vitamin C / Vitamine C 20 %
Calcium / Calcium 2 %
Iron / Fer 4 %
Imported by / Importé par
JAN K. OVERWEL LIMITED/LIMITÉE
Woodbridge, Ontario L4L 9C1
TORONTO • MONTREAL • VANCOUVER
mL

FIGURE 1.5

Nutrition Facts Label: Nutrition Facts translate the foodstuff into scientific food classifications and recommended dietary intakes. The absence of some percentages or some substances has been publicly questioned.

in North America and Europe—thus lending legitimacy to dietary guides as important state tools for maintaining a nation's healthy eating.

There are many formats of state dietary guides, but all set out a plan to enable people to acquire the daily recommended intakes of nutrients and energy. Variations in dietary needs, by age and gender, are often noted, but the advice is often generalized for maximum appeal. This is a universal diet, endorsed by objective, impartial science, suited to human biological needs rather than cultural and social preferences. Each citizen is responsible for following this advice. Currently, many states produce guides for health professionals and educators, and shorter, generally visual, guides for the public. The latter guides were first published with nutritional categories, and later shifted to food-based classifications—"food groups"—offering rules about the quantities of foods to be consumed. This nutritional advice faces the challenge of translating scientific nutritional categories—macronutrients, for instance—into real foodstuffs that are actually available, affordable, and considered familiar food. State guides, by necessity, depict commercially available foods, perhaps allowing impartial nutritional advice to be usurped by advice offered by the food industry. For example, the Canadian dietary guide pictures purchasable foodstuffs displayed on a rainbow-like swoosh, divided by colours into vegetables and fruits (green) and meats and alternatives (red), for example. This resembles a supermarket flyer, advertising weekly specials, but instead of prices includes recommended quantities (cups) to be consumed. The classification brings together categorically different

foods (apples, broccoli, oranges, and potatoes, for example) in different forms (fresh, frozen, and canned). The guide offers to simplify the consumer's choices: Eat any of these; they are all the same, interchangeable, and good for you. Elsewhere, in the United States and Australia, the guides focus upon a plate, in the belief that this will more accurately send the message of what to eat, rather than what to buy. The plates—"MyPlate" and "Eatwell"—all feature large portions of vegetables and an equal-sized portion of grains, including bread, rice, and pasta, and smaller portions of protein and dairy foods. These are remarkably reminiscent of the earlier stereotypical "meat and two vegetables" or "meat and potatoes" evocation of Euro-American eating habits and what constituted "the proper meal."

In the interests of simplicity, dietary guides offer nutritional advice across ethnically diverse populations, with a "one diet fits humanity" approach. However, this diet does not exist; people's dietary needs vary based on their ancestry and personal heredity. The dietary plans of state guides reflect the availability of foods furnished by the food industry, and these may not be suited to all citizens' dietary needs. For example, the inclusion of milk in state dietary guides is very problematic for people of Chinese ancestry, for whom milk is indigestible due to lactase impersistence (Health Canada 2007; Wiley 2011, 93–95). For this reason, it is argued that Euro-American state dietary guides can erode culinary diversity through the presentation of foods and consumption rules that reflect those of the dominant ethnic groups in society. The rules of portion sizes, meal structure, and references to snacks locate them firmly within Western society's cultural construction of eating traditions (Iacovetta 2000). Within them we catch glimpses of culinary ethnocentrism and **bio-ethnocentrism**, such as what constitutes a "good" diet and "healthy" body. Furthermore, the guides carry an implicit message of individual responsibility to curb any "bad" eating habits and follow the objective rules, thereby masking the social realities of ethnicity and class, and access to food.

The effectiveness of the guides has been questioned, since many nations have witnessed eating habits change to include higher intakes of carbohydrates, fats, and protein. The prominence of meat, particularly beef, as part of a "proper meal," and the increased consumption of milk, soft drinks, and **fast food**, has seen populations become increasingly obese, and these factors have combined with a decline in physical activity to result in ill health from NCDs. However, these changes cannot be entirely attributed to the failure of nutritional advice, and should instead be contextualized within postwar society (Levenstein 2003). The combination of the ascendancy of the food industry, and a desire for plenty and convenience after the scarcity of war, turned the omnivore's dilemma into this: how to choose from an infinite variety of foods for sale. Food shopping shifted from buying to eat to buying for a lifestyle—tempting, convenient choices, and endless variety, to match everyone's identity aspirations. The advice and choices presented by the dietary guides seem stark and onerous in comparison, given the abundance of the grocery store, the opportunities to eat ready-made meals, and the realities of work, child care, and income, which often limit access to healthy foods.

Today the guides have to compete with many sorts of dietary advice, and to be effective they have to deliver a message that makes sense and is easy to follow as part of everyday life. The message of nutritional science, however, is multi-faceted, changeable, disputed, and sometimes inconclusive; this is the nature of scientific research and its findings. This does not detract from its importance, and states have made headway by including nutrition labels on packaged foods. However, the fights over this labelling attest to the divergent agendas of state health policy and manufacturers' marketing strategies. For instance, nutritional labels do not specify a daily recommended quantity of sugar, and no percentages are listed to help consumers make healthy choices (see **Box 1.2**, Food Labels). Unfortunately, the lack of dietary clarity has created a space for alternative nutritional advice, also making authoritative claims and promises, offering appealingly simple, magic-bullet solutions to weight and health issues. Commercial products deliver many nutritional messages, using the idiom of health and appealing to consumers' needs for advice about how to make good choices. This widespread nutritional advice

BOX 1.2:
FOODSCAPE GROUNDED: FOOD LABELS

Our food is often labelled, which can offer insight into the cultural classification of food, its value, and the creation of meaning for consumers. The inclusion, and exclusion, of information on labels has turned them into a battleground, pitting manufacturers, governments, and consumer advocacy groups against one another. The Nutrition Facts labels, for instance, contain important information to help a consumer determine the health implications of a product. But questions have been raised about the clarity of the information and the omission of some important data. Furthermore, the ideology of nutritionism has prompted many foods to carry labels making health claims.

- **Select** *a range of labelled foods, from "naturally" packaged fruit with a sticker added, to a fully encased food product with a nutritional guidelines panel.*
- **Compare** *the information. What does it tell you about the foods? About their origins, nutrient values, and uses?*
- **Assess** *the relevancy of the information. What more would you like to know?*
- **Reflect** *on how these products are made meaningful—socially, economically, and nutritionally.*
- **Choose** *one product that carries health claims, and* **examine** *the source of its authority.*

has been called **nutritionism**, which has made contemporary society obsessed with the effects of foods on our bodies, and on our health (Pollan 2008, 27–32). The individual's responsibility for eating properly appears to have been well and truly embraced. The ideology of nutritionism emphasizes single, beneficial nutrients in certain foods—superfoods, for instance—while ignoring other nutrients found in the same foodstuff. Milk, for instance, is widely promoted as a source of calcium, but its fat content is minimized (Wiley 2011).

Do-It-Yourself Diets

Nutritionism has spawned a strong public discourse on food as a source of essential nutrients—as made evident by the barrage of advice to eat calcium-rich foods and more omega-3s, to avoid refined carbohydrates and trans fats, and to seek out antioxidants, and organic and probiotic foods. These messages are delivered by governments, the food industry, celebrities, and by alternative food advocates through the mass media, both locally and on a global scale. As a consequence, the language of food, shopping, and eating has taken on a scientific edge, making people aware of how food can affect us and reinforcing the responsibility of wisely choosing healthy edibles. This situation has created room for the invention of dietary and culinary traditions, drawn from other times and places, to help the omnivore decide what to eat. These new classifications of foods categorize them as "good" or "bad," and include rules to organize consumption and promote health. These are do-it-yourself diets chosen by individuals, and as such they represent personal choices to follow a specific eating pattern in order to accomplish certain goals, including healthfulness and weight loss, and to address ethical concerns. The diets are not organized into a dominant overarching cuisine, but they do help solve individual omnivores' dilemmas—and raise concern about the ubiquity of gastro-anomie (Fischler 1988, 290; Knight 2015). Some DIY diets, it must be noted, draw upon questionable science, and promote quick-fix solutions, which may be harmful (Rousseau 2015).

An example of a DIY diet is the Paleo diet, which references humanity's shared omnivorousness. This deeply ancestral diet is not necessarily endorsed by trained nutritionists, but it does have wide popular appeal. In the Paleo diet, also known as the "hunter-gatherer diet" or the "caveman diet," the omnivorousness of our ancient ancestors has become fixed as "the original healthy diet." The diet's literature claims this is "the one to which we are best genetically adapted" and an "evolutionary template" that can "reduce or eliminate your risk of diseases, including cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and the vast majority of all chronic degenerative diseases that affect humanity" (Paleo Diet 2010). The basic strategy of the diet is to reject "the foods that agriculture brought us (cereals, dairy products, fatty meats, salted foods, and refined sugars and oils)," since these are "disastrous for our bodies which are essentially unchanged from that of our Stone Age ancestors—bodies that are ideally adapted to a diet of lean meats, fresh fruits and veggies" (Paleo Diet 2010). This calls for practitioners to go back

to the pre-domestication diet, which is presented as high protein, as much as 65 per cent meat, with the remainder derived from plant sources. A problem with the Paleo diet's assertion is that we do not know exactly what our early ancestors ate; we do know it had to be high energy to serve the brain's needs, but we do not know in what proportions. Indeed, if present hunter-gatherers' diets are assessed, the proportion of meat is less than 65 per cent, with the exception of more northerly hunters (Lee 2003, 48). We do know that humans migrated into new environments, and the presence of human cultures from the Arctic to deserts calls into question the claim there is one diet that meets the nutritional needs of all humans. It also serves as a reminder that many ethnic groups have biologically adapted to their environment and its foods, and emphasizes the fact that biological evolution did not stop with the emergence of anatomically modern humans. The ancestors of the proponents of the Paleo diet would also have slowly adapted to their domestication-based diets (King 2011). Rather than going back to an imagined diet of the past, others argue it is important to consider healthy diets of the present, and this is exactly what nutritionists have done in the Mediterranean diet.

The already mentioned "superfood" olive oil has seen a wholesale domestication and is now drizzled over all manner of foods in societies where it was once considered foreign and unpalatable (Iacovetta 2000; Meneley 2007). Its global meteoric rise in sales has been helped by nutritionism championing its healthful properties, and by the Mediterranean diet as a cuisine-based set of food rules for achieving a healthy body. This diet became an important model for nutritionists in the United States who were grappling with the reality of high incidences of coronary heart disease in the 1980s. The Greek island of Crete was featured in a long-term study beginning in the 1940s, which revealed that the population displayed significantly lower levels of chronic diseases (Nestle 2000, 1196–97; Pollan 2008). The Cretan diet of olives, olive oil, bread, cereal grains, pulses, wild greens and herbs, small amounts of lean meat, fish, milk, yogurt, cheese, and wine became the model for the Mediterranean diet. In recognition of the diet's importance, it has been included on the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity Representative List in December 2013. The UNESCO submission quietly states that the value of the diet "has now been demonstrated by science" (UNESCO 2010a, 6), offering legitimacy to what otherwise is acknowledged as arising from the social and cultural life of the countries in which it is prevalent. This diet has been championed by nutritionists and entered the public imagination as the epitome of good, healthy food and slow, companionable eating traditions. It stands in contrast to the bad, unhealthy fast food of industrial North America and Europe (Meneley 2007; Gallegos 2009, 202–3).

While the scientific knowledge of nutrition is important, it cannot shape a specific menu of dietary choices for the whole species; there is much more to people's eating practices than sourcing a range of nutrients. Critics of the dominance of nutritional advice have argued that it has reduced food to a merely biological relationship with people, and ignores the culture of food and eating that moves it from a diet to a meaningful, memorable part of human

life—a cuisine. With this in mind, some state nutritional guides are moving away from specifying which foods to eat for health, and instead are focusing on how to cook, how to eat, and how to savour the pleasures of food. The first principle in Brazil's Dietary Guidelines states "that diet is more than the intake of nutrients" (Ministry of Health of Brazil 2014, 15) and any recommendations need to be in tune with their times, which means avoiding ultra-processed foods, becoming informed, and being wary of food advertising and marketing (Ministry of Health of Brazil 2014). This guide is about eating foods, combined to make meals, which are eaten regularly, carefully, comfortably, and in company. It is inclusive, and realistic about understanding the obstacles—information, access, cost, cooking skills, time, and marketing—and provides practical solutions. This guide is reminiscent of Brillat-Savarin's gastronomic meditations in *The Physiology of Taste* ([1825] 2009) and endeavours to put the cuisine back into nutritional science, and return food to people's social and cultural lives, rather than just their biological needs. It is also a call for localized, meaningful eating, which can sustain the environment and community. The next chapter charts human food-getting practices, adaptations to collectively solve the omnivore's dilemma, and the selection of ingredients and flavours of cuisines.

SELECTED READINGS

Sutton, David E. 2001. *Remembrance of Repasts: An Anthropology of Food and Memory.* Materializing Culture Series, edited by Paul Gilroy, Michael Herzfeld, and Danny Miller. Oxford and New York: Berg. https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350044883.

Many of the concepts explored in this book have become standard fare in the anthropology of food. It draws together the themes of memory and cuisines, and the sensory creation of meaning, with an ethnographic focus on Greece. It carries through to the material on meals, repetition, and rituals, as a comprehensive analysis of food in a local context, and globally through the migration of Greeks.

Mintz, Sidney W. 1985. *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History.* New York: Penguin.

The place of sugar in human diets and in industrial cuisine has given this foodstuff considerable contemporary baggage, which warrants a closer look at this seminal sugary work.

FIGURE 2.1
Sockeye Salmon Smoking: Alder-smoking filleted salmon on the banks of the Yakoun River, Haida Gwaii, British Columbia.

CHAPTER TWO

SETTLED INGREDIENTS
Domestic Food Production

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- *Describe and compare the variety of food-getting strategies and understand how these lay the foundations for cuisines.*
- *Articulate the concept of holism as applied to food production.*
- *Recognize the localized nature of ingredients and their transformation into the cuisines of settled populations.*
- *Describe the sharing of food within the domestic group for sustenance and social benefits.*
- *Discuss the possible reasons for the shift to domestication.*
- *Trace the social consequences of the intensification of production and the use of surpluses.*

INTRODUCTION

When I was doing fieldwork in Old Massett, Haida Gwaii, British Columbia, a young Alaskan Haida man who was visiting the community told me, "Even the salmon are greasier." It was an expression of his enjoyment of the rich social and cultural traditions he was experiencing during his stay in the village. He felt that, in comparison to the inhabitants of Hydaburg (Alaska), the Old Massett Haida were following their traditional ways, such as hosting feasts, carving totem poles, learning to sing and dance, and eating the food that defines their culture: salmon. Many Haida talk of the taste and "greasiness" of salmon as a valued quality of the fish, and one that is evocative of **home**, family, and tradition. This is the talk of a place and its food, and their relationship with a people's sense of identity. Salmon are a wild food source, one of many

that have sustained First Nations since time immemorial, and it is this relationship between people and their food sources that will be explored in this chapter.

The world's food-getting strategies—hunter-gathering, pastoralism, horticulture, and agriculture—are long-term, life-shaping engagements between people and their food sources. Each can be regarded as a settled relationship, one that has allowed for ingredients and flavours to become well established as parts of cuisines. Ingredients are the range of animal and plant foods classified as edible. Flavours are complex amalgamations of the tastes and smells of ingredients combined together to make a dish, and can also be substances added in smaller proportions to create a distinct taste, marking its identity either weakly or strongly. Specific flavour combinations can identify distinct cuisines. These settled food-getting strategies, their selected ingredients and flavours, and the domestic production of food set the scene for the next chapter's exploration of increasingly mobile people and foodstuffs, and the interconnected global production of food.

FOOD-GETTING STRATEGIES AND CUISINES

Many mythological traditions tell of a culture's origins in a particular place, while the scientific understanding addresses the palaeoanthropological and archaeological evidence of human migrations out of Africa beginning about 60,000 years ago (Stringer 2011). The world was colonized through successive migrations, followed by settling and long-term occupation of the land by a variety of distinct cultures. Eventually some hunter-gatherers slowly started to domesticate wild species of animals and plants, beginning about 15,000 to 10,000 years ago. These were not revolutions but rather slow, incremental changes, influenced by population growth, environmental change, and climate change, with probably none being the single causal factor. Our long-term successful adaptations to the world's environments established patterns of food getting that still exist today and have supported ethnic groups for generations. Each solved the omnivore's dilemma and formulated the beginnings of culinary traditions based on chosen food sources. The prolonged exposure to foods allowed settled people to physiologically respond to their diet to such as degree that genetic changes occurred, conferring protection in particular environments. The legacy of these ancestral diets can still be carried in today's populations, as, for example, in the capacity to digest milk—**lactase persistence**. From the perspective of **evolutionary gastronomy**, the ancestral dietary patterns are part of contemporary cuisines, making them useful sources of medicinal knowledge. This presents cuisines as a functional mix, not a random assemblage, working at a genetic level to confer advantageous responses to the selection pressures of diseases, droughts, and plagues. Cuisines—the food selection, taste preferences, methods of preparation, and eating traditions of various cultures—become successful dietary choices, enabling survival in a given environment (Nabhan 2006, 10).

Ancestral cuisines emerged from the food-getting strategies of the world's indigenous and ethnic groups. The strategies can also be called subsistence patterns or practices, or modes of production, and all describe the same essential task of finding, growing, or somehow obtaining food. Each of the four major types of food getting—hunter-gathering or foraging, pastoralism, horticulture, and agriculture—is concerned with how people organize their relationship with nature, and with one another, to acquire food. Each form has many variations, determined by climate, terrain, and biodiversity, and this chapter considers specific examples to illustrate the major characteristics. Food-getting strategies must be understood from a holistic perspective, which recognizes that all aspects of culture—economic, political, ideological, and social—are interconnected, influenced by the geographical environment, historical circumstances, and contact with other cultures. We can holistically explore food-getting strategies' interconnections through the following steps, moving from the ground upward to ideas and the shaping of meanings.

- *The environment—climate and terrain—which places demands upon all species, each of which must adapt to the circumstances and find a life-sustaining ecological niche. People have had to work with these challenges by developing knowledge, skills, and technologies to find shelter and water, and to harvest food sources.*
- *The types, abundance, and seasonality of food species, whether wild or domestic, require further behavioural responses from humans, who must organize themselves to tend, harvest, store, and survive on plant and animal food sources.*
- *Domestic groups—the cooperative units of food acquisition, held together by kinship and marriage—organize the production, exchange, and consumption of food.*
- *The method of food getting requires a division of labour, in which productive tasks are allocated by gender and age, and by recognition of specialized skills.*
- *Tasks also involve technology, which extends from simple hand tools to manufactured machinery, all involving the application of knowledge and skill.*
- *The productive roles of group members are played out according to socially constructed ideological norms of behaviour, which extend into attitudes about sharing, ownership, and the exchange of all resources. The ideology creates ties and obligations based on social equality, differentiation, and decision-making, contributing to the social and political organization of society.*
- *Cosmologies offer explanations for the way of life, located in religion and science, legitimize ideological attitudes toward the natural world, and underpin a society's beliefs, values, and behavioural norms.*

Within these interconnections, the value and meaning of food is created, employed, and changed. For each of the food-getting strategies discussed it is important to recognize that there are unique responses, differences, and ongoing changes that make people's food-getting strategies a dynamic facet of culture.

HUNTER-GATHERING OR FORAGING

Hunter-gathering, *gatherer-hunting*, or *foraging* are all terms used to describe the oldest form of food-getting activity that humans have pursued. Its heyday lasted from two million years ago until about 15,000 years ago, when humans gradually began to domesticate plants and animals. Today most hunter-gatherers have small populations—less than 1,000 people—in areas where other strategies are difficult, such as deserts, semi-deserts, tundra, the Arctic, and dense tropical forests. Since anthropological fieldwork began in the nineteenth century, the lives of hunter-gatherers have change significantly, leading to questions about whether today's hunter-gatherers do in fact represent the model of early human society. Or is it more appropriate to consider contemporary hunter-gathering a specific adaptation to the more marginal environments now inhabited by some groups (Wilmsen and Denbow 1990; Kent 1992; Lee 1992; Lee and Guenther 1995)? For example, the apparent ease of acquiring food led to the concept of the "original affluent society," dispelling earlier ideas of a desperate and arduous search for food (Sahlins [1974] 1978). The Ju/'hoansi of Botswana and Namibia, usually associated with this concept, were estimated to spend about 20 hours per week actively hunting and gathering, with an additional 20 hours of domestic tasks, such as cooking, butchery, and tool repair. This working life was considerably more leisurely than that of "affluent" Western industrial societies (Lee 2003, 54–56). However, elsewhere, in different environments, hunter-gatherers worked for many more hours, casting doubt on the narrative of an easy life for early humans. Without a doubt, however, recent ethnographic work has revealed the remarkable knowledge and skills needed to survive in climatic extremes, whether by choice or by necessity, and the contemporary examples demonstrate the basis of wild resource subsistence shared by hunter-gatherers of antiquity. The Ju/'hoansi themselves have had to adapt to changing circumstances in the Kalahari Desert, and now many are farmers or wage-labourers, and only minimally hunt and gather.

There are two types of hunter-gatherers identified from the ethnographic record: small-scale, "immediate-return" and large-scale, "delayed-return" hunter-gatherers. These are distinguished by population size, linked to the abundance of the environment in each groups' traditional territory (see **Table 2.1**). The availability of food sources influences people's mobility, the production of surpluses, exchange, and the overall social and political organization of society. Each culture's cuisine will reflect this social order, such as equal or differentiated access to foods, bringing value and meaning to food through its social uses.

Small-Scale, Immediate-Return Hunter-Gatherers

Imagine yourself suddenly set down surrounded by all your gear, alone … in the Great Sandy Desert, Western Australia. You are the guest of a Martu Australian Aboriginal hunting group, who are fixing their supper at a dinner camp among the red sand dunes and spinifex grass. You are hungry

and beginning to wonder what you will be offered to eat. The men have successfully killed a hill kangaroo—kirti-kirti—which is now roasting in the ground oven of hot coals and sand. It smells good. Hot, sweet tea is offered, with damper, a bush bread, grey with ash. Also witchetty grubs (cossid larvae), bush tomatoes (solanum fruit), wild pencil yams, and bush onions are ready to be eaten. The group members are happy to share with you, following yunkupayi, without expecting anything in return. You gratefully accept your charred but bloody piece of kangaroo, and start to eat—it tastes good. (Bliege Bird and Bird 2008; Bliege Bird et al. 2012, 68)

Martu traditional territory, in the Great Sandy Desert of Western Australia, encompasses 13 million hectares that are too dry and hot for many subsistence practices. Small-scale hunter-gathering is a successful adaptation to this environment, but the aridity and cycle of seasons demand mobility of Aboriginal people in search of water, and available plant and animal foods. A pattern of congregation when food is abundant, and dispersal when food is scarce, is typical of small-scale hunter-gatherers as they utilize the range of available food resources. Typically, food is consumed immediately, with very little storage; constant access to wild food sources—which constitute natural, living storage—is required. This method of food getting demands encyclopaedic knowledge of where to find foods at all times of the year, including times of scarcity. The Martu pride themselves on eating widely, drawing upon 106 plant species, including seeds, roots, bush tomatoes, tubers, fruit, and gums; and 50 animal species, including kangaroos, goannas, bustards, bandicoots, honey ants, and grubs. Overall, these ingredients are the foundation of meals, and it could be argued that this is the epitome of eating seasonally, locally, and having familiar flavours—what has become known as *terrior*—that define a cuisine's identity. Different meats have distinct flavours, and when baked or roasted, develop their own characteristic tastes. Kangaroo meat, for instance, is dark and strong tasting, while witchetty grubs have a nutty flavour (White 1997, 232). The use of acacia seeds and a variety of gums adds extra flavours to some foods, such as the seedcakes or damper that were traditionally made by the Martu (Tonkinson 1991, 45). Some of these desert ingredients and flavours now feature prominently in contemporary Australian national cuisine (Hutton 1999).

Today there are about 1,000 Martu, living at outstations, such as Jigalong and Parnngurr, that range in size from 40 to 200 people depending on the seasons (Scelza 2012). Until the 1960s, the Martu relied solely upon wild food sources, a defining hunter-gatherer characteristic, but now supplement store-bought foods, "shop tucker," with their traditional "bush tucker" diet (Scelza, Bird, and Bliege Bird 2014). The Martu may live in a harsh, desert environment, with little apparent food from the perspective of outsiders, but they also live in a "food desert" when it comes to having access to commercial food shops (Scelza 2012). The store-bought foods—including flour for damper, jams, sugar, tea, rice, canned foods, and cheaper cuts of meat—are of only limited availability and affordability, making them unreliable in comparison to the traditional wild foods (Scelza, Bird, and Bliege Bird 2014). Today's Martu way of life comprises a hybrid economy—government support, wage labour, sale of art works and

FIGURE 2.2
Bush Tomatoes: Packaged "bush tucker" sold by an indigenous Australian company, as a taste of Australia.

hunter-gathering (Codding et al. 2016). Some Martu have purchased four-wheel-drive trucks, facilitating desert hunting and gathering, which is regarded as an essential, otherwise traditional, pattern. This pattern is based on small, mobile, egalitarian groups—bands—based upon equality and cooperation. Bands are a domestic group, comprised of kin (through blood or marriage), and each smaller family unit within the band will have its own cooking fire. Kinship organizes hunter-gatherer life, and giving food reflects these relationships (Tonkinson 1991, 50, 71–72). Decision-making about when to move the camp, or where to go hunting and gathering next, will be made through discussion and consensus, with band members of the greatest age and wisdom being called upon to make appropriate choices (Tonkinson 1991, 43; Lee 2003, 111). Provisioning, for hunter-gatherers, is at the heart of everyday social life, making the domestic and the public aspects of people's lives one and the same.

Hunter-gatherers do not eat all the edible species in their traditional territories; instead they eat a selected range, with food classifications evaluating ingredients on a scale of desirability, from preferred foods to those of last resort. This is not about diet and nutrition; instead it

concerns the social and cultural meanings of food. Each culture has criteria to determine a food's position, lending culturally specific values and meanings. For instance, a food's worth will be gauged by taste, rarity or abundance, ease of collection, duration of the eating season, tastiness, satisfaction of hunger, absence of side effects, and acceptability as food for family, friends, or guests (Lee 2003, 43). The meanings of the food lie in its social uses—efforts to acquire, gift potential, and enjoyment. Many cultures, including the Martu, express a liking for meat, fat, and sweetness, placing these ingredients into valued positions (Lee 2003; Mintz 1985; White 1997).

Deciding what to hunt and gather depends on the seasons, food availability, time, and personal energy levels, and the labour is organized by division through gender, age, and specialized skills. All members of hunting and gathering peoples contribute in some way to the tasks of getting food, with children participating and learning from a young age. The tasks do have gender affiliations—women's tasks and men's tasks—but often these are based upon cooperation and flexibility within and across genders, with women hunting and men gathering as needs dictate (Tonkinson 1991, 45; Bliege Bird and Bird 2008). Hunter-gatherers employ further productive strategies—such as sharing tasks, and dividing tasks—to acquire food in the environment they inhabit. How tasks are allocated involves complex ideological attitudes and individuals' social strategies, which are about not only satisfying hunger efficiently but also shaping social relations and defining identity. In the case of the Martu, the motivations for women hunting goannas and men hunting kangaroos reflect the social construction of the gendered division of labour (Bliege Bird and Bird 2008).

Researchers have used variations of optimal foraging theory, derived from evolutionary ecology and microeconomics, to explore hunter-gatherers' decisions about which resources to acquire through cost-benefit calculations. The ranking of food species, from this perspective, can be based upon low cost—in terms of time and energy expenditure—and high yield with respect to calories. Through this calculation, an optimal diet will be identified—composed of highly ranked species that are reliable, are easy to acquire, and yield consistent calorific returns (Cashdan 1989; O'Connell and Hawkes 1984). It can be calculated that for the Martu women, goannas are a reliable, high-calorie food source that requires skill to catch, commands 74 per cent their food-getting time, and contributes 58 per cent of all bush food to feed a hungry family (Bliege Bird and Bird 2008, 665). However, goannas are not a highly ranked food and are usually eaten while out getting food, rather than saved to take back for others to share (672). Researchers argue that Martu food-getting decisions are based on calculations of risk, rather than calories—the social cost of no food versus the benefit of some food to feed close family and friends, or to share more widely. This moves decision-making beyond food as just a source of energy and nutrients, and into the social benefits of sharing food. Goannas are less risky as a food source than kangaroos. Kangaroos, however, are valued food and require greater skill and time to catch, but the male hunter may return empty-handed, making this a more risky pursuit. Martu women's goanna hunting is a beneficial strategy for reliably feeding

their hungry families and their women hunting companions. This fits the ideological expectations of women's behaviour, and the cultural value and meaning of goanna, which make it inappropriate for social sharing. Goannas are regarded as *malya*—selfish food, to be eaten only by those who hunt together, as their immediate reward. Men, on the other hand, achieve social benefits by sharing kangaroo meat—a big reward, with a wider circle of Martu men and women, and hungry guests. The social benefit builds alliances and demonstrates the men's fulfillment of the highly esteemed practice of honest generosity—*mirtilya*—affording them social respect (677). Martu evaluate foods by their capacity to feed social relationships. This expectation of sharing, known by the Martu as *yunkupayi*—generalized reciprocity—is a core value in hunter-gatherer culture and is found in the everyday acts of food species sacrificing themselves and of people sharing food that has been acquired. It must be remembered that the Martu, and others, do not talk in terms of calculations or cost/benefit analyses; the role of food is understood as instrumental in social life and its ideologies.

Mobility requires little accumulation of property, so consequently small-scale hunter-gatherers have simple toolkits, ranging from a variety of bags and carrying bowls to digging sticks and spears. In Australia, "appliances" like large grinding and pounding stones, which would be too heavy to carry, remain at campsites for anyone to use. The land and its resources are also a form of property, but are inalienable, belonging to everyone, and cannot be sold. Kin groups "own" areas of land, called a *manda* by the Martu, where people feel attachment and have responsibilities to look after the land, but they do not refuse permission to others to share its resources (Tonkinson 1991, 66). The complex religion of Aboriginal Australians, called the Dreaming or Dreamtime, and specifically *yulpiriti* by the Martu, provides the cosmological basis to people's relationship with the land, with its law requiring ritual performances to renew food resources and offer respect to non-human species. The Martu are obliged to burn the land, in a pattern of mosaic burning, which renews many species and is a form of stewardship. To restrict our understanding of food getting to purely the satisfaction of people's nutritional needs ignores all the dimensions of meanings articulated by those who follow this way of life. The Martu and other Aboriginal Australians, such as the Belyuen of the Northern Territory, spend a lot of time "just sitting" when they are out getting food—they sit on the beach, tell stories, and gossip, which from a narrow economic viewpoint could be regarded as non-productive time. From the Aboriginal perspective, this is essential stewardship of the land, culminating in renewed resources; decisions about "where we gana go now" are determined by ecological, mythic, and sentimental criteria and a personal relationship with the land (Povinelli 1992, 183). Similarly, rock art paintings across Australia are cosmological expressions and serve practical purposes, such as explaining the creation of the landscape. The designs represent the travels of ancestral beings across the land, mapping water sources, detailing the custodial rights of individuals, and reminding of ritual obligations. For the Martu, the designs not only communicate their connection to the land but also allow them to share their knowledge

TABLE 2.1 Comparisons between Types of Hunter-Gatherers
Small-Scale Hunter-Gatherers vs. Large-Scale Hunter-Gatherers

Small-Scale Hunter-Gatherers	Large-Scale Hunter-Gatherers
Relatively frequent movements from camp to camp, as determined by seasonal food sources.	Seasonal movements to camps, with return to permanent village sites.
Few surpluses acquired; food either used immediately or left stored in the wild until needed.	Many surpluses, food processed and domestically stored for later, delayed use.
Constant sharing of generalized reciprocity as core behaviour for all.	Constant sharing, but also gift giving to enhance prestige through **redistribution**.
Egalitarian social organization, with equality of access to foods reflected in relatively equal social order.	Equality of access to foods, but surpluses allow differences of social standing, creating a ranked social organization.
Band-type political organization, comprised of small social groups related through blood and marriage, and a diffuse decision-making system based on wisdom, skill, and age.	Tribal or chiefly political organization, comprised of large communities of extended families or lineages, with ascribed and achieved leadership making decisions and keeping order.

of it with others (McDonald and Veth 2013, 368). Elsewhere in Australia, rock paintings, such as those depicting barramundis, are evidence of what food is locally available and simultaneously deliver information about how to prepare the food, such as tips about the location of the internal organs, the tastiest parts, and how to share the food with others (Taylor 2008, 872). Ritually repainted and renewed, the images of specific foods can be equated with shopping lists, take-out menus, and recipes that help the rock-shelter occupants make culinary decisions. For the Martu and other small-scale hunter-gatherers, food getting is life—it defines people's relationship with one another, and with the place they live.

Large-Scale, Delayed-Return Hunter-Gatherers

Imagine yourself suddenly set down surrounded by all your gear, alone … on the banks of the Yakoun River, Haida Gwaii, British Columbia. An A-frame cedar-shingle house stands on the bank; a smokehouse nearby has telltale smoky wisps rising from its vents. Drying racks, decked with gleaming red, thinly sliced salmon—t'salj—*crowd the river's edge. You can smell alder smoke, mingling with a rich, fresh fishiness. From the house, a Haida woman approaches you, smiling a welcome, while on the river a man is working gillnets, pulling gleaming fish into the boat; he raises a hand in greeting. You are expected. "You must be hungry … we are about to eat—from the river," the woman says, and calls to her husband to row back. Sitting on the deck, in the warm spring sun, you share a meal of barbecued sockeye salmon*—tsiin—*Caesar salad, baked potatoes, and dried seaweed*—sgiw.

This tastes so good in the fresh air, and you relax into companionable silence, listening to ravens calling in the distance. "Now … you need to learn how to treat the salmon with care and respect… let's prepare these fish," the man states, as he leads you to the boat.

The second type of hunter-gatherers are the "delayed-return," large-scale societies, such as the First Nations of the Northwest Pacific Coast. From the perspective of some archaeologists, this type emerged about 15,000 years ago and gradually ushered in domestication in some areas of the world (Hayden 1990, 2003). These complex hunter-gatherers were, and are, associated with environments that supply abundant, reliable, and often relatively easily acquired resources capable of supporting large populations. The ability of foods to be processed and stored, delaying consumption, allowed them to be used in complex social and political activities.

The First Nations of British Columbia and Alaska, such as the Haida, Kwakwaka'wakw, Tsimshian, and Tlingit, have all shared adaptive characteristics based upon the shared Pacific Northwest environment and its food sources. Cold, wet winters and hot summers characterized the region. Both land and marine species were abundant along the coast, and through the changing seasons First Nations peoples moved from permanent winter villages to dispersed hunting, fishing, and gathering grounds across their traditional territories to harvest seasonally abundant resources. The staple ingredients used by First Nations of the Northwest Coast were very diverse. The Haida used over 50 types of fish, birds, and marine and land mammals; over 50 different plants, including tubers, roots, and berries; and 27 species of marine invertebrates, such as abalone, clams, chitons, and octopus (Van den Brink 1974). Salmon are the defining staple resource that the complex social and political organization of traditional society was built upon. There are five types of salmon: Chinook (Tyee, king, spring), Chum (dog), Coho, Sockeye, and Pink (humpbacks). The life of salmon involves hatching in rivers and a lifetime (ranging from two to seven years) out in the ocean, until it is time to return to their natal waterway for spawning. Historically, the returning runs of salmon were so large that thousands of people could be supported, without too much anxiety about shortages. The salmon were predictable, relatively easily caught, and could be preserved by smoking or drying to provide food through the winter months. Today, although there are fewer salmon, their value and meanings for First Nations remain strong. Salmon are more than "food fish" for First Nations; they define people's identities and attachment to traditional territories. As the salmon return to their spawning rivers, a ritual is held to return the backbone of the first fish, to acknowledge the cyclical nature of reality. This ceremony is reproduced up and down the coast by First Nations peoples, and has been recorded in the rich mythological traditions and ethnographic records as vital to ensuring the return of the salmon in subsequent years (Berman 2000). This offering of respect is an expression of cosmological ideas concerning the reciprocal relationship of sacrifice (by salmon) and thanks (by humans) that resonates through the food acquisition process for First Nations (Walens 1981).

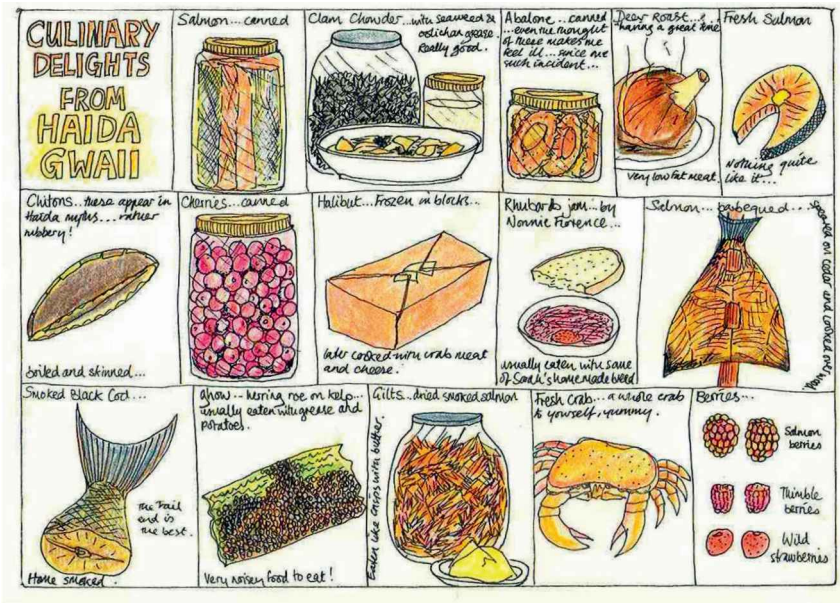

CULINARY DELIGHTS FROM HAIDA GWAII
Salmon... canned
Clam Chowder... with seaweed & oolichan grease really good.
Abalone... canned ...even nice moonlit walk like it... twice me with accident...
Bear Roast... having a great time
very low fat meat
Fresh Salmon
nothing quite like it...
Chitons... these appear in Haida myths... rather rubbery!
boiled and skinned...
Cherries... canned
Halibut... frozen in blocks...
bake cooked with crab meat and cheese.
Rhubarb jam... by Nonnie Florence...
usually eaten with sauce of Sarah's homemade bread
Salmon... barbequed...
Smoked Black Cod...
the tail end is the best.
Home smoked.
Ahgaw... herring roe on kelp... usually eaten with geese and potatoes.
Very rotten food to eat!
Gilts... dried smoked salmon
Eaten like crisps with butter.
Fresh Crab... a whole crab to yourself, yummy.
Berries...
Salmon berries
Thimble berries
Wild strawberries

FIGURE 2.3

Culinary Delights from Haida Gwaii: A cartoon by the author of many of the local foods eaten during fieldwork in Old Massett, Haida Gwaii, British Columbia (Crowther 1990).

Seasonal mobility, combined with permanent village sites and enhanced food storage, allowed accumulation of other goods. The abundance allowed hunter-gatherers to generate a substantial surplus, more than was needed to feed everyone, which was crucial to the social uses of food, especially in the political sphere. Ideologically, an egalitarian ethos existed, giving everyone access to food sources, but there was also a more exclusive system of ownership, allowing for ranked social differentiation to be accepted. Resource sites—berry-picking patches, halibut banks, and salmon-fishing spots—were owned by corporate descent groups, known as lineages. These were the primary domestic groups, linked by unilineal kinship, whose members owned the foodstuffs in conjunction with one another and cooperated in the tasks of managing, acquiring, processing, storing, and distributing food. A strict gender ideology organized the division of labour, reinforced by cosmological taboos to control women's activities and protect men's hunting and fishing. Women were primarily responsible for gathering and processing foods, and managing their storage through the seasons of feasting and potlatching. While gender stratification was evident, the contributions of women to the productivity of the lineage were accorded value, and the roles of men and women were regarded as complementary. The prevalence of matrilineality in many northern Northwest Coast First Nations is also

indicative of the high status of women. It has been argued that for many indigenous peoples, the decline in women's status, and the devaluing of their productive activities, coincided with the arrival of Europeans and their ideology of private property and market exchange (Leacock et al. 1978; Leacock 1983).

Each nation organized the foods into culturally meaningful categories; some foods were accorded greater prestige, reflecting the social order and the future purpose of many foods—the social life of the ingredients of meals and feasts. The social differentiation exhibited by complex hunter-gatherers directly influenced the value and meaning of food, with domestic meals being distinguished from public occasions such as feasts. As food took on a significant role in defining social relationships, it came to have its own identity, with distinct dishes emerging from specific recipes (Boas 1921). Food was, and is, a vital part of people's identity work, and remains an important part of community relations. **Table 2.2** illustrates Haida ideas about high- and low-class foods, associated with differential access and use by social groups. The assessment of value is based on abundance—with the more abundant food having lower value and the rarer foods, or those requiring the greatest cooperation, having a higher value. Food processing—for example, through smoking, using alder or cedar, and fermenting salmon roe—contributed to the flavours of First Nations' cuisines and added value. Dishes that involved considerable time, effort, skill and valued ingredients and flavours were regarded as high-status foods, reserved for appropriately ranked guests (Boas 1921).

First Nations' food sources were also instrumental in establishing the ranked social organization of these societies; lineages fought with property, including food, to change their status in relation to other lineages in a community. This would occur at elaborate feasts and

TABLE 2.2 Haida Food Classification: High Class vs. Low Class

High class	*Less abundant and scarce foods*, restricted access, and those that require lots of cooperative labour, are highly valued. Salmon—Chinook, Sockeye, and Coho—less quantity, more solid and rich, higher value than abundant Chum and Pinks. Large animals—that could be distributed to feed a large number of guests, as at feasts and potlatches, such as whales, sea lion, and halibut, and beef today. Roots and berries, such as bog cranberry. *Preserved foods* demonstrate sound management of resources, such as oolichan grease, salmon, dried seaweed, and berries.
Low class	*Abundant scrounged foods*—shellfish, birds, small animals. Less labour investment, open access to resource grounds.

Source: Boelscher 1988, 73; Crowther 1992.

potlatches during the winter months, when people congregated in the permanent villages. Reciprocity and generosity were valued; however, the abundant resources added a competitive element to society, with lineages working hard to amass more than they needed to eat but enough to maintain or increase their social and political standing. This redistributive economy of First Nations hinged upon giving away wealth—including food—to increase the descent group's status. The significance of this will be explored further in chapter 6 on eating in.

Delayed-return hunter-gatherer society was based on wild food sources, with stewardship practices to enhance the natural environment. The production of abundant subsistence foods and large surpluses supported large populations and contributed to the type of social and political organization most often associated with societies that have domesticated food sources.

DOMESTICATION OF PLANTS AND ANIMALS

We can regard the transition from collected wild foods to produced domesticated foods as a gradual intensification of human manipulation of plants and animals. This continuum stretches through degrees of stewardship or management, as practised by hunter-gatherers today, and involves environmental modifications to encourage growth or access to food sources (Turner, Deur, and Lepofsky 2013). Such modifications to look after the food species include improving irrigation and drainage, replanting roots, weeding, and killing predators. For instance, First Nations in British Columbia are known to have tended and harvested estuarine root gardens, such as rice root, the common name for a species of lily (Joseph 2013). Stewardship tells us about people's cosmological relationship with nature, of the requirements of food species, and the actions necessary to increase food supplies. Intensified stewardship resulted in domestication, the deliberate transplanting of wild species into the vicinity of humans, and selective breeding for useful traits within those species (Deur and Turner 2005, 15). This selective breeding eventually results in the co-evolution of animals, plants, and humans, whereby each is biologically shaped by its reliance upon the others (Nabhan 2006). The transition toward domestication was not a revolution, nor did it follow a specific trajectory or momentum; in other words, stewardship does not always gradually lead to wholesale domestication. Furthermore, domestication occurred in widely dispersed geographical locations, and while there is a general time frame for domesticated species appearing around 13,000 to 10,000 years ago, exactly when this happened varies across the globe. Everywhere, the useful properties of wild species were gradually selected, transformed into qualities, with value and meanings (see **Box 2.1**, Pondering Wheat). Domesticated species differ from their wild originators in several ways. Plants often develop larger tubers, seeds, fruits, or qualities that make them useful, while their ability to effectively disperse their seeds is greatly reduced. Large animals often become

smaller (and vice versa), display pronounced capacities to provide fleece, meat, or milk, or acquire temperamental characteristics making them suitable for herding and milking. All represent valuable species qualities selected through long-term breeding.

The question of why hunter-gatherers moved from collecting to producing food is notoriously difficult to answer, and there is probably no single answer. Social scientists have chewed on this issue for decades, and likely will continue to do so as new evidence becomes available. One explanation is based on the assumption that hunter-gatherers would have inevitably invented new ways of acquiring food, and that it was "natural" human efficiency to innovate through technological change. This is often represented as "progress," enabling hunter-gatherers to move from a hard life of incessant movement and hunger to an easier, settled life based on productive, reliable food sources. Given the relative affluence of some hunter-gatherer populations, this reasoning is questionable, especially when one considers the hard work and food insecurity of agriculture. Indeed, the dietary changes that occurred with domestication did not always enhance people's nutrition or their resulting health. Further explanations for domestication place it in the context of the environmental stresses faced by hunter-gatherers. The major stress was presumed to be population pressure, causing hunter-gatherers to intensify their access to food because their population had risen and outstripped the wild food supply. However, hunter-gatherers, and other forms of small-scale subsistence, are known to be capable of maintaining a long-term balance between food acquisition and population size, setting cultural limits to production, and making food security relatively manageable (Bodley 1996, 98).

Yet another stress was climate change, which could have depleted wild resources, necessitating domestication as a means to minimize the risk of food shortages by producing more than was needed and storing it for uncertain times. Climate change could, however, also have provided an opportunity, occasioned by the gradual warming of the world, for domestication to take place. For example, abundant stands of wild grasses appeared after the end of the Ice Age, allowing humans to intensively reap, process, and store the grains, and slowly setting people on track to move some of those seeds into their own care. This transition is apparent in the Near East, where the hunter-gatherer Natufians began to use wild wheat before 10,000 years ago, which eventually led to its domestication (McCorriston 2000, 159). Exactly how this happened is uncertain, but one theory has postulated that domestication may have arisen from people noticing that their garbage dumps sprouted food seeds, an observation that ushered in more systematized sowing. A more settled life to look after crops did occur, but this also brought vulnerability to attack and environmental disasters, such as floods, droughts, and pests. As well, in the long run denser human habitation and proximity to animals brought new, deadly diseases (Cohen 1997).

An alternative explanation for domestication considers what plants and animals were domesticated, what they were used for, and how their domestication related to humans' social

BOX 2.1:
PONDERING WHEAT: DOMESTICATED GRAIN TO FLOUR

The story of domestication has a celebrity species: wheat, the grain that was shaped through human selective breeding. Domesticated in the Fertile Crescent, centred upon today's Iraq and nearby countries, wheat today is the world's major grain crop, a staple of 40 per cent of the world's population. Two types dominate: bread wheat, and durum (or hard) wheat for pasta and low-rise breads. It contributes 20 per cent of total human food calories (Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO] 2014).

In our domestic kitchens, this important grain is most frequently encountered as flour or as an ingredient in many products, such as pasta and bread. How it got there ties our species together; domesticated species—cultivars—become human dependent, meaning that they rely on humans for survival in an agricultural environment. Wheat was bred to keep the grains intact at maturation, rather than splitting and sowing themselves, which made it easier for people to harvest without losing too many grains.

Compared with wild wheat, domesticated wheat shows increased grain size, an increase in starchy, digestible carbohydrates, and a decrease in protein, fibre, and minerals (Hebelstrup 2017, 2). Its seed head retains the grains when harvested but also releases them (non-brittle rachis and free-threshing traits) (Asplund, Hagenblad, and Leino 2010, 2303). Domestication also led to intensification: while it is estimated that 5,000 acres of wild wheat were required to provide for a single Natufian hunter-gatherer, when wheat was domesticated in agricultural societies, the same acreage could support 5,000 people (Kiple 2007). Domestication selected characteristics useful to human needs, working upon the species' genes through hybridization and mutation. Researchers are now able to trace genetic changes to the plants, as well as scale yields, resistance to pests, and the nutritional content of the foods. This provides information about harvesting, yield, and nutrition, and exposes the human rationale behind domestication—to acquire more—together with wheat's qualities: the sweet taste, a sign of energy.

Grains, of which wheat is but one example, need to be processed in some form to make them edible. Evolutionary selection reduced the size of our molars, and we processed and cooked foods outside our bodies, making them ready for digestion. Grains have been sprouted, fermented, ground into flour, roasted, boiled, and baked to enable us to make them dietary staples (Peña n.d).

continues…

box 2.1 continued…

The fineness of grinding—ranging from course meal to flour—determines wheat's uses, as does its colour—brown to white—the latter accomplished by isolating the bran and germ and concentrating on the grain's core, which is bleached. In earlier centuries, the time and effort required to process white flour meant that access to it was restricted to the wealthy, so that the qualities of wheat carried social connotations: brown bread for peasants and white bread for the wealthy. However, by the nineteenth century, steel-milling gave rise to cheaply produced white flour, albeit with a greater loss of nutrients (Rubel 2015, 15–16). The colour of bread still carries social baggage.

The milling of wheat increased its energetic potential, and cooking further enhanced this, making its consumption—as porridge or bread—a good source of energy. It's now known that the saliva of populations with long-term use of starchy grains includes an enzyme that breaks the starch down and creates a sweet taste, conferring a selective preference for this food, which provided much-needed energy in an agricultural lifestyle (Hebelstrup 2017, 3).

relations. This approach moves domestication away from food as just good to eat, to food as good to think with, meaning it can be employed as part of social strategies, as noted in the cases of the Martu and Haida. This argument places the process of domestication into the realm of human intentionality, rather than as a response to resource stress precipitated by population pressure, and makes the socially assigned values and meanings of food important. The early domesticates, such as gourds, dogs, wild grains (alcohol), avocados, chilies, goats, sheep, and squash, were luxuries, domesticated to impress, rather than satisfy hunger (Hayden 1990, 2003). The early domesticates involved effort—investment of labour and care—for small yields that would not have staved off starvation and did not serve the daily nutritional needs of the locality (Hayden 1990, 61). Instead, these domesticates were chosen because they had "non-quotidian" desirable characteristics, sought-after qualities not found in everyday food: tastes that were valued (such as fattiness), carbohydrates, and intoxicants (51). This made it worthwhile to cultivate those species that could cater to the luxurious tastes of a region. Politically, those who controlled the supply and served the foods at feasts could impress their guests, create obligations, and assert power and authority over others. This scenario builds upon humans' long-term strategy of food sharing through generalized reciprocity, which ties people together through ongoing expectations and obligations of give and take, and takes it into a competitive context whereby there were enough surpluses to create social differences between people. This

FIGURE 2.4
Packaged Wheat Flour: Many brands and varieties of wheat flour are available for home cooking.

shifts domestication past the nutritional and energy efficiency arguments—i.e., that humans faced starvation and intensified to get a better return—and into the meaning of food for social life. These early indicators of food's social and political uses are as relevant now as in the past, and help us understand how people employ food as part of identity work. This will be addressed in the chapters on eating.

Domestication brought about a gradual change in the position of the household; the extended families of small-scale hunter-gatherers, who cooperated with one another to acquire food and were at the centre of all social life, became increasingly distinct lineages that engaged in the political sphere as autonomous entities. The domestic sphere shifted to a private, family-centred unit, and the public sphere became the site of the social order, where the productive capacity of the household could be called upon to underpin the status of its members as they

TABLE 2.3 Pastoralists, Horticulturalists, and Agriculturalists

Pastoralists	Horticulturalists	Agriculturalists
Mobility is determined by terrain, seasons, and the availability of water and pasture for the herds. Range from nomadic to sedentary.	Semi-sedentary to tend gardens and manage storage.	Sedentary societies to tend nearly constant production of fields, but see rural-urban migration and eventually expansion into new lands. Settled to mobile members.
Some surpluses produced, especially of animal products—dairy and the herds themselves are wealth.	Surpluses produced that can be stored and used for social purposes, such as raising social standing.	Huge surpluses produced that are stored and widely distributed to support non-agriculturally productive workers. Surpluses used to support larger populations.
Generalized reciprocity among the domestic group, with exchange between more socially distant groups to form alliances or access other resources.		Generalized reciprocity among the domestic group, with increasingly dominant market exchange and redistribution underpinning state authority and control.
Equitable access to necessities, with social differentiation based on ownership of wealth, creating ranking and stratification.		Inequitable access to necessities, with social differentiation based on ownership of wealth, creating stratification.
Larger population comprised of kin groups who form the domestic groups, with wider decision-making roles played by leaders of the tribe or chiefdom.		Population comprised of kin groups that form increasingly isolated domestic groups, with wider decision-making roles of leaders becoming formalized and centralized in a state.

actively differentiated themselves from one another. Profound ideological changes occurred, and cosmologies shifted from equality between nature and humans to human control over nature. The social and political organization of societies that relied upon domesticated plants and animals shifted from egalitarian to ranked, and for some into stratification. Gender relations also became much more unequal; in particular, the value accorded to women's productive contributions dwindled, while their tasks increased and their public life became more constrained. This diminishing value of women's increased work will be explored further in the chapter on cooking, especially as it become more pronounced with agricultural intensification and the industrialization of society.

Domestication does represent a trend of intensification—slowly producing greater surpluses and supporting larger populations—which found its greatest expression in agricultural societies, discussed later. Despite agriculture's dominance, there were, and are, many smaller-scale societies that remained relatively settled in specific environments. Their food-getting strategies include horticulture (the extensive use of domesticated plants and some small animals) and pastoralism (the domestication of, and reliance on, herd animals). Both strategies emerged around 11,000 years ago. Some became the beginnings of agricultural societies about 6,000 years ago, and some have remained as specialized adaptations to particular environments, such as tropical forests, grasslands, and mountains. These offer relatively stable ways of life, as long as access to land is sufficient to support their populations. Population growth can occur, but it is not known to be as dramatic or uncontrolled as has been found in agricultural societies. For example, a variety of biological and cultural means have been used by such small-scale societies to balance their populations with food production, such as the rigours of work taking its toll on reproductive capacities, and the length of breastfeeding before weaning, helping to extend birth intervals. Cultural rules—such as the age at marriage, expectations for the frequency of sexual intercourse, postpartum taboos on sexual intercourse, abortion, contraception, infanticide, migration, warfare, and the value accorded to children as contributors to the household—can all control population size (Robbins 2011, 141–44). Some of these measures are based upon external circumstances, and some are rational choices that are made by individuals and families to limit or expand their numbers—and all can solve the problem of food security.

PASTORALISM

Imagine yourself suddenly set down surrounded by all your gear, alone … on an open grassland plain, with tall, spreading trees dotted across the rolling land. Nearby, a collection of thatched, conical huts, surrounded by many standing and recumbent cattle—lowing—and people busy among the animals. People and cattle are at home with one another. You approach, smelling the smoke from many small fires of cow dung, and listening to the chatter of women, cries of infants, and crowing of cockerels. This is a Nuer village in South Sudan. Your name is called, and a tall man lopes forward, grinning broadly. "Come," he says, "have breakfast, before we take the cattle to the river." Not wanting to be a bother, you hesitate, as you are led to a nearby hut, where a woman smiles in greeting, gestures to you to sit on the dry earth, and hands you a spoon. "Please … have some maize porridge. It has goat butter, and milk," she says, watching with anticipation as you lean forward and scoop a blob from the iron pan, before ferrying it to your mouth. She and a crowd of curious children watch as you bring the spoon to your mouth, and carefully swallow the gelatinous porridge. It tastes oily, slightly cheesy, and palatable. Laughter erupts, and smiles break out all around.

Pastoralism is the reliance upon domesticated herd animals as the primary source of food—not as a supply of meat but rather as the source of an array of renewable foods and substances. Herd animals, as ruminants, are capable of transforming plant material into products—milk, blood, fleece, hair, and dung, for instance—that are useful to humans. The relationships between pastoralists and their herd animals are very complex and deeply rooted in people's sense of identity. This is not a sentimentalized relationship, but it is generally respectful. Pastoralism is well adapted to semi-arid and mountainous areas, where pasture and water can be found for herd animals but where the terrain and lack of water make horticulture or agriculture more difficult. Pastoralism is found throughout the world, and the species of animals depends upon the region. Sheep and goats were early domesticates, beginning around 12,000 years ago throughout the Middle East and southwest Asia (Kiple 2007, 16). The domestication of cattle began about 7,000 years ago in southwestern Asia when their wild ancestor, the auroch, was tamed. Cattle dominate in East Africa, where the Maasai, Samburu, and Nuer have long pursued this way of life, while in the Middle East and Mediterranean, sheep and goats are dominant, as seen among the Basseri of Iran. Many pastoralists do keep other herd animals, but often define themselves in relation to one type of animal, such as cattle for pastoral peoples of East Africa.

The availability of vegetation for pasture, water sources, and seasonal weather patterns influence the mobility of pastoralists—some of whom are nomadic, moving frequently, and others of whom move seasonally (known as transhumant pastoralists), like the Basseri, who move their herds between lower and higher land in search of pasture. This is a demanding way of life, requiring portable property, efficient storage and processing of foods, and culinary traditions that are adapted to mobility. The Nuer of South Sudan serve as an example of the pastoral way of life, as recorded in 1930s by anthropologist Evans-Pritchard (1967), and from 1980s by Hutchinson (1992). Nuer traditional territory is in the Nile Valley, where the tribe disperses during the dry season and congregates in villages on higher ground during the wet season. This environment demands that the Nuer and their neighbours, the Dinka, practise a mixed-mode food-getting strategy: pastoralism and crop gardens, together with hunting, fishing, and gathering. It also requires cooperative support and generosity in sharing food with kin by blood and marriage. The cattle, however, are the focus of the two cultures. The lives of the Nuer have been significantly disrupted by long-term civil war (1955 onwards), with at least 2,000 dead and over 300,000 displaced since 2008. Many orphaned Nuer children fled, some becoming refugees in North America, Australia, and Europe (Holtzman 2008). The violence of war means that many aspects of Nuer pastoralism have changed, although some have returned to this way of life. Even without warfare, land is important for any pastoralists, with rights to pasture often regarded as belonging to the whole tribal group, and in areas where there are many pastoralists this can lead to conflict and ultimately complex negotiations to determine access. There is increasing pressure by many states to settle pastoralists into one location, to stop conflict, and assert control over them. This is actively resisted (Bodley 1999, 106–9).

The Nuer explanations for their reliance on cattle are found in their religious beliefs, which place cattle herding as a gift from their god—*kuoth*—and imbue their social and economic life with sacred meaning. Cattle rely on the Nuer, and the Nuer rely on cattle—for food and for creating society. Nuer language reflects this preoccupation, with many words to describe the colours, patterns, and horns of the cattle, allowing people to talk about their animals in great detail. The vitality and fertility of animals and people are linked; healthy cattle mean successful social relationships. The herds represent the wealth of individuals and lineages, and are used to claim status and differentiate people. This includes competition within and between lineages, which are played out through animal exchanges. Marriage, for instance, entails gifts of cattle, tying men and women's lives to their animals—to marry, to have children, to have a social network of kin. Many pastoralists are patrilineal and patriarchal, reflecting men's ownership of herds and their primary role in moving and protecting the herds in often demanding conditions. The Nuer have a complex "segmentary lineage system," which involves changing alliances between close and distant patrilineal kin according to political circumstances. Individual domestic groups, led by men, are the primary decision-makers, but seek cooperation with others. The exchange of food—milk, for instance—is important for maintaining these life-sustaining relationships. During the wet season, Nuer kin live together on raised land and plant crops. As the dry season commences, young men take their herds to river-flooded pasture, congregate in "cattle camps," and defend their rights to the land. As Evans-Pritchard (1967) noted, the Nuer exhibit a pastoral mindset: proud, courageous, loyal, and generous, displaying contempt for hunger and hardship, and self-reliant but fiercely cooperative (181–84). In many pastoral societies, younger men are expected to be risk takers, willing to look after the animals; their visible, public, productive tasks are given greater social value than women's are, which contributes to the patriarchal ideology of pastoralism.

The herds are important as living food providers, and increasing the size of the herd brings food security and status. The staple ingredients of pastoralists' meals are milk, milk products (yogurt, cheese), blood (for some cultures), and some meat. Thus the Nuer are primarily milk rather the meat producers, and they rely upon the renewable products of their herds. Milk is available all year round by staggering the breeding of the cattle, and everyone drinks milk on a daily basis. This reliance on milk correlates with Nuer and other pastoralists being lactase persistent. Milk is added to millet porridges, together with a deep yellow cheese that can be stored for several months (Evans-Pritchard 1967, 25). While men look after the cattle, it is women who produce the most important food—milk—and are instrumental in shaping men's identities, by giving them this life-sustaining food (Hutchinson 1992; Holtzman 2002, 260). Meat is acknowledged as a preferred food, but the Nuer note that it is shameful to kill an animal just because of a desire for meat (Evans-Pritchard 1967, 26). When meat is eaten, it comes from sheep and oxen that are sacrificed as part of religious ceremonies, or from animals that have died of natural causes—fertile cows are rarely killed. Some foods are obtained by growing

crops in gardens or fields during seasonal occupation of settlements; for instance, some sorghum millet, maize, and beans are grown in sufficient quantities to provide for making beer and porridge—*kop* and *wal wa* —but not enough to define the Nuer as cultivators. Fish are also important, but they are regarded as a low-status food, eaten during the dry season when there is less milk. Some hunting and gathering is also pursued during the dry season, adding wild fruits, seeds and roots to the diet. Blood is a supplement to the Nuer diet during the dry season, and involves controlled bleeding of a cow from a neck vein and the collection of blood in a gourd. The blood is boiled, added to porridge, or roasted as a block (Evans-Pritchard 1967, 28, 81, 70).

The Nuer classify foods by their blood content, giving them value and meaning; foods with the least amount of blood have the lowest status. Blood is regarded as carrying human vitality, from conception, through kinship, to food, and it is essential to Nuer society. Food is generated by blood, and blood by food; the two are linked, and all Nuer "distinctions of age, gender, descent and community are likewise inseparable from the daily gathering, giving, sharing and/or withholding of food" (Hutchinson 1992, 493). Milk is the perfect food, highest in blood content, discernable by the veins around a cow's udder, and blood relatives are obliged to share it. Once a man is initiated as an adult, there is a taboo against him milking his cattle, and he is forbidden to cook; thus he comes to rely upon his wife, or female kin, to provide him with milk to eat or drink. Women's role as a mediator in the provision of food is derived from cattle and anything cooked; this gives them power and reveals the gendered division of labour as complementary, rather than subordinate, to men's activities. Furthermore, women have been known to withdraw access to milk, and to stop cooking, to punish men (Holtzman 2002, 272–273).

HORTICULTURE

Imagine yourself suddenly set down surrounded by all your gear, alone … in a village on the Trobriand Island of Kiriwina. It is hot, humid, and sticky. Small thatched houses, with open verandas, raised off the ground, stand in among palm trees. People are busy, and group of little boys crowds around you, eager to touch. Nearby, tall yam storage houses appear quite full, and you hope you will be offered some to eat. Yams, you have learned, are kaula*—preferred food, gifts, and a staple after the yam harvest. Your host welcomes you onto the veranda, and offers some* kureya*—leftovers—served on a china plate—and* seyada tapiokwa*, a tapioca cake, baked in an earth oven. You are hungry, but you know that for the islanders it is shameful to admit this, and accept the food with controlled dignity. Perhaps later you will be offered yams.* (MacCarthy 2009, 2012)

The Trobriand Islands are located off the east coast of Papua New Guinea and have been the subject of considerable anthropological writing since Bronisław Malinowski first did

FIGURE 2.5
Rarotongan Garden: Small-scale domestic food production, with kumara (sweet potatoes), taro, bananas, and papaya.

fieldwork there in 1914. The tropical forest environment, with high rainfall, is particularly well suited to horticulture, which is common across the shared tropical zone of South and Central America, Africa, Southeast Asia, and through Melanesia and Polynesia. The term "horticulture" is derived from the Latin word *hortus*, meaning garden, and it describes the creation of multi-species growing plots: polycropping. Horticulture is also known as "shifting," "extensive," or "swidden cultivation," all of which capture one of its main characteristics: new gardens are periodically created and old ones regenerated by several years' regrowth of wild vegetation. Everywhere it is practised, horticulture requires a large enough land base across which to move garden plots to support the population. Another descriptive term is "slash and burn," derived from the most prevalent method of creating garden plots: the tropical forest is cut down, left to dry, and then burned; the resulting ash enriches the soil. This food-getting strategy involves only human labour, which in comparison to agriculture is not as intensive; there is no form of irrigation, and the gardens generally contain a large variety of domesticated species. This aspect of horticulture provides a model for today's **agroecology**, and **biointensive farming**. It is a reliable food-getting strategy, as long as pests or other vagaries of nature do not strike, and it will produce surplus foodstuffs that can be processed and stored. In keeping with any important human endeavour that is potentially risky, horticulturalists often employ rituals

or forms of magic to try to bring some protection to the garden and enhance the growth of the crops. For example, Trobrianders use magic, reciting spells to help the yams grow and to protect them from drought and marauding pigs.

Trobrianders grow two types of gardens: *bwanawa* (kitchen gardens) and *kaymata* (yam gardens) (MacCarthy 2012, 137). The former are tended by women, and provide food for the household, including sweet potatoes, bitter manioc (cassava), and a wide variety of other species. Yam gardens are men's gardens, in which the prized varieties of yams are grown: *teytu* and *kuvi*, for instance, which are used for gift giving, display, and eventually eating. What is not grown can be hunted, gathered, fished, traded for, or bought, and many horticulturalists keep domesticated pigs, chickens, and other small animals, all of which are important supplements to their otherwise high-carbohydrate diet. Trobriand Islanders utilize many foods, but express a preference for *kaula*—highly valued, good food, typified by home-grown yams, taro, and sweet potatoes (MacCarthy 2012). Sweet potatoes were domesticated in the Americas at least 8,000 years ago and are possibly the oldest domesticate anywhere (O'Brien 2000, 208). Root crops are particularly well adapted to tropical environments and to the cultivation techniques of horticulture, allowing propagation through the planting of seed tubers. These produce fairly large yields, are not overly arduous to grow, can be stored for a period, can be eaten by both humans and animals—such as pigs, which is another way to use a surplus—and can be exchanged to create social ties. Any food-getting strategy that produces more than is needed for everyday food consumption will use these surpluses for other social purposes, such as gift-giving and status enhancement.

A Trobriand kitchen garden provides most of the daily household food for a couple and their children. Yams, on the other hand, constitute a whole other category of food: they are wealth, and a symbol of the economic and political power of a matrilineage and its affinal affiliations. Men grow yams for their sisters, who belong to the same matrilineage. The yams will be received by the sister's husband, stored in a yam house, and will often not be eaten by their owner, but used like a bank account to acquire other goods: arm-shells, necklaces, earrings, betel nuts, pigs, bowls, and other locally produced goods (Weiner 1988, 82–86). Yams must be judiciously given to anyone who has helped a man, and chiefs in particular must distribute yams as a sign of their power (Weiner 1988, 106). Chiefs will receive a special type of yam: a *kuvi*, which can grow up to 12 feet long. As part of the yam-growing cycle, a chief can sponsor a yam-growing competition—*kayasa*—that encourages the growing of more yams than usual, and the men who win are given extra gifts by the chief. The chief gives the surplus yams to a neighbouring chief "to make good friends" and build political alliances. In the future, the recipient will give back an equal gift, securing the friendly relations between neighbouring hamlets (Weiner 1988, 112). This is a form of balanced reciprocity. Yams are a form of perishable wealth (they will last four to five months before rotting) that is used to maintain social relationships and claim status. "Yams are food, wealth, and ultimately power" (Weiner 1988,

95–96). But the power rests on the work of others, and because yams need to be eaten before they rot, they cannot be accumulated for long—and then the round of yam growing begins again. We can see that there is more to yams than just a secure food supply; they are instrumental in social and cultural life.

Horticultural gardens belong to individuals and lineages, and the common division of labour sees men cutting down the tropical forests, burning, and sometimes planting, while women tend the gardens, weeding and composting the plants. Harvesting is often shared between men and women. To look after gardens, people need to be fairly close by, and consequently many horticulturalists are semi-sedentary, staying in villages for a decade or so and then moving to another village site. This allows for more permanent dwellings, more belongings, and in terms of food production, more complex cooking techniques than are found among mobile cultures. The complementary roles of men and women in the production of food are noteworthy in horticultural societies, and women's work is valued, translating into higher status and greater respect. The Trobrianders have a matrilineal kinship system, with a ranked social organization that shows incipient stratification of lineages into chiefs and commoners. This is a chiefdom, with a paramount chief who has authority over all Trobrianders on the archipelago. Even though this is a matrilineal society, authority resides in men, and they are the chiefs and lineage heads. The food resources on the islands are largely owned by lineages, with some common stands of fruit trees, coconut palms, and bananas. Population growth and limited land can compromise a community's ability to maintain lengthy fallow periods, causing gardens to be replanted more quickly. At present, Trobrianders are experiencing reduced soil fertility, lower crop yields, and deforestation, as new gardens are needed to support the population. Island horticulturalists are especially vulnerable to seasonal weather variations linked to climate change, rising sea levels, and natural disasters, all of which pose new challenges to food security and the ability of traditional authority systems to manage food production and distribution (MacCarthy 2012). To manage these circumstances, an intensification of food production, through investment in new species, fertilizers, and pesticides, is being contemplated: a shift toward agriculture.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture began as a distinct food-getting strategy around 6,000 years ago and was primarily associated with the rise of large-scale societies or "civilizations" around the world. It represented a further intensification of production, the causes of which have long been debated. For instance, population growth has often been cited, but it is unclear whether this was the cause or the consequence (Bodley 1996; Cohen 1997, 290). Further causes could be a limit to the land base being used by a population, perhaps due to environmental or

social factors; or the need to produce more surpluses to meet political demands, including the use of surpluses as gifts to secure peaceful relations with neighbours or to engage in trade. Intensification was achieved in a variety of different ways across the world, such as slowly selecting new crop varieties by boosting soil quality, increasing labour, and improving irrigation, tools, and storage so that little spoilage occurred. This brought higher levels of labour, and the use of draft animals, ploughing and harrowing devices, and eventually greater energy inputs, with mechanization. Agriculture employs irrigation and the planting of only a few, or often a single, species at a time in the fields: monocropping. The term is derived from the Latin word *ager*, meaning field.

Agriculture can be regarded as a specialized food-getting strategy that is highly adaptive to a wide range of environments, allowing agriculturalists to expand into new lands and successfully grow food. Indeed, while we imagine agricultural societies as "settled" and working on the land, they have spawned the most mobile populations, expanding into new lands and

FIGURE 2.6

Home Canning: Home canning of Roma tomatoes, after the summer harvest. Indicative of agricultural monocropping and the storage of favoured foods for Italian-Canadians.

FIGURE 2.7
Prince Edward Island Potato Field: Potatoes growing in deeply furrowed red soil, part of the island's annual $1 billion potato industry. Sixty per cent of the harvest goes for processing into major brands of French fries and potato chips.

slowly migrating off the land into urban centres following the mechanization of farming (Brody 2000, 7, 82–89). Agriculture and its contemporary form, industrial agriculture, have become the most dominant forms of food production in the world, incrementally transforming the global food economy. Consequently, the cuisines of agricultural peoples have become the most mobile, travelling with their carriers across the globe, existing as reminders of home, sought out by immigrants. The ingredients of these cuisines have also become mobile, travelling far afield to serve migrants' needs and becoming adopted into the culinary traditions of far-flung places.

Grain crops were particularly prominent in early agriculture, and this emphasis continues into the present, with ingredients focused upon staples, such as wheat, rice, and maize (Larsen 2000, 15; Cohen 1997). The benefit of these staples is their ability to be stored, ground, and converted into a range of other food products. It has been suggested that the processing of grains allowed them to be consumed by infants, shortened the length of breastfeeding, and brought shorter intervals between births, thereby increasing the number of children born. Despite this advantage, the agrarian diet can also be described as having become more monotonous, less varied, and more grain-dependent, which (the archaeological record reveals) brought into the human experience such nutritional deficiencies as scurvy, rickets, and anemia (Jones 2007). These nutritional challenges, and the arduous work of agriculture, test the idea that this way of life represents "progress," "development," and "civilization." The large surpluses

of food supported a stratified social order, which brought a life of plenty for a few, and life of hardship for many. However, through the centuries some agricultural societies have slowly balanced the struggles with improvements to people's lives due to advances in sanitation, medicine, and eventually nutrition, allowing mortality rates to decline, translating higher birth rates into greater life expectancy and real population growth.

India

Imagine yourself suddenly set down surrounded by all your gear, alone … in a farming village in Karnataka State, South India. It a bustling place, colourful, noisy, and hot. You walk toward the whitewashed stone house, with small windows and a dirt path. A thin-legged white cow roams through the area, startling you and a chicken, which runs away. Sitting cross-legged on a platform near the door are two women in bright saris, who elegantly bow their heads with a Namaste gesture. Another woman emerges from the house, calls out a greeting to you, and gestures you to come inside. Sitting on the ground, another women is making jalada *millet roti, flattening the bread between her palms, clap-clap, and then onto a hot kerosene griddle. Inside, two men are eating what appears to be a curry with rice and roti, served on metal plates. They look up, and ask you to eat with them … it smells delicious.*

We can look at India as a particular example of an agricultural society that gave rise to a complex society, characterized by monumental architecture, cities, centralized authority, a stratified social organization, trading networks linking the state, a codified legal system, writing, and a large population. India has an extremely complex history and is a land of enormous environmental and climatic variation, which created a modern state of distinct regions, each of which has a distinct cuisine. It is typical of an agricultural society, being a territorial state underpinned by an ideological system located in religion, politics, and the global economy, which justifies the order of society. In India, as elsewhere, the worldview of agriculturalists places humans firmly in the capacity of dominating nature, with a little help from gods and spirits. This attitude permeates the nature of relations between people as much as those between people and nature.

The history of what is now India goes back at least 4,000 years and is characterized by the movements of different peoples into the area, all bringing their own cultural influences. Each successive migration added new crops to support the Indian population and form the basis of its culinary traditions. Indian agriculture, the major staples, and the use of spices have been shaped by the Dravidians, the Harappans, and from 2000 BCE, the Aryans. These latter migrants brought new food crops such as spinach, okra, and ginger, and other flavourings such as fenugreek, cardamom, and cumin. They also brought religious beliefs that were codified into the Hindu sacred texts, the Vedas, over the next 10 centuries. These included the caste system and the dietary rules that are people's *dharma*. From 1500 CE, the Mughal dynasty, originating

in Turkey and Afghanistan, brought an Islamic influence, including what is regarded as the origins of India's "high cuisine." Shortly after, the Portuguese brought the European influence, and by the 1700s India came under the political and economic control of Britain, as the Raj. In 1947, India gained independence and the region was partitioned into what is today India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Throughout the millennia, India saw periods of centralized imperial rule over smaller, distinct kingdoms, of which there were over 500 when India became independent but had ceased to exist by 1971 (Smith 2006).

The distinct kingdoms of India laid the foundation for today's regionalism and offer an example of the ways in which agriculture underpinned the political system. In some instances, the local ruler could establish authority by administering an irrigation system that was necessary for the growing of staples, such as wheat in the cooler north and rice in the warmer south. The agriculturalists would pay a tribute to the ruler, who would be supported by their labour. The local leader would also engage in **redistribution** feasting as another means to maintain authority (Kornmesser 1997, 117; Smith 2006). This type of system, which is very common around the world, defines the small-scale agriculturalists as peasants who largely produce food for the subsistence of their family or household but are also tied into wider economic relations with other, more powerful members of society (Wolf 1966; Scott 1985). In India, with the abolition of the local rulers in 1971, the centralized administration of the food system was taken over by the democratic government (Smith 2006). State intervention in Indian agriculture (the Green Revolution) will be explored in the next chapter.

An ethnographic study of agriculture in India from the late 1980s, undertaken in Karnataka State, South India, provides an account of traditional agriculture (Vasavi 1994). The village of Bijapur in Karnataka is in a drought-prone area and thus experiences periods of extreme food insecurity. This reality is alleviated by the region's traditional agriculture. The land around the village is owned by different caste groups; members of the highest caste have the largest land holdings on the better land, while members of the lowest castes either have small plots or are landless labourers. Agriculture centres upon the patrilineal household, where the division of labour establishes men as the primary workers of the land and food production, while women are more involved in looking after children and providing food. However, as is always the case in all forms of food production, both men and women work hard, but through the ever-present gender stratification, men's work is accorded greater status. Children in agricultural societies, particularly boys, have long been regarded as important contributors to household productivity, which perhaps explains the preference for larger families in agricultural societies.

The use of the land is determined through Hindu precepts, such as *gunas*, or personality attributes associated with Ayurvedic medicine, which divide the land according to soil type, water access, and suitable crops. In turn, the crops are classified as weak or strong, with the strongest coming from local seeds, whose strength is transferred to the consumers. The crops include millet, groundnuts, pulses, plantains, turmeric, chilies, sugar cane, wheat,

aubergines, onions, tomatoes, cucumbers, and pomegranates. Until the 1980s, most of these were consumed in the village, and any extras were taken to market for sale, but the priority was self-sufficiency, not growing for the market. The agricultural cycle is based upon "seeing" "appropriateness," also drawn from Ayurvedic ideas, which involves carefully watching for the right rain, growth, and temperature to perform the necessary tasks. This is the empirical knowledge of generations of farmers who have watched and learned the ecological conditions of the area, and it enables them to make decisions. This creates an agricultural system that is inherently flexible and offers opportunities to avoid disasters by not following a uniform pattern of planting. It promotes fallow periods, intercropping, and crop rotation with a randomness that actually enhances success, and has made them "the bedrock of sustenance for generations" (Vasavi 1994, 290). Accompanying the purely agricultural tasks are many propitiatory rituals, fertility rites, and further calendric calculations of auspicious times for planting

BOX 2.2:

FOODSCAPE GROUNDED: IN SEARCH OF STORED AND GROWING FOOD

In your kitchen you probably have some storage—refrigerator and some cupboard space? Inside these, there will be multiple species of foodstuffs—how many? All of these will have been grown somewhere—where? These foodstuffs are no longer living and have been processed in some manner for distribution and storage, until their eventual consumption. What are the different forms of preservation and storage? What do these do to the consistency of the foods and their uses?

These foods are removed from their sites of production—some distant, some nearby. How easy is it for you to reconnect with growing food? Take a trip; go in search of locally growing food. This can be animal- or plant-based food. Where is it grown? What types grow nearby? Who grows it? Can you meet them? Where is it distributed after harvesting? Is it sufficient to sustain your local community?

- **Reflect** *on your findings, compare them with one of the food-getting strategies, and consider whether food production holistically influences your life.*
- **Make** *connections: consider environment, types of food, abundance, seasonality and food species, domestic groups, division of labour, technology, knowledge and skill, cosmologies, and ideological norms.*
- *What does this say about our* **relationship with food***?*

and harvesting. The agricultural life has always been tied to religious festivals and rituals dedicated to protecting the crops and bringing a good harvest, which eased the anxiety of agricultural life (Samaddar 2006, 112). The Hindu goddess of prosperity, Laksmi, is honoured in many field shrines, where offerings are made to bring "auspicious profit" and the earth is worshipped through the goddess. All the villagers, even the landless, join in with the major fertility rites, which brings a unity of purpose to the community and underscores the central belief that "productivity has sacred origins and is tied to social obligations" (Vasavi 1994, 290). The worldview is rooted in religion, but it is based upon cooperation rather than outright domination. However, it can also be argued that the unequal social order—the stratified caste system—is normalized and perpetuated through the system.

In agricultural societies, like that in India, the production of larger surpluses capable of supporting larger populations has allowed greater specialization to occur, including food production itself. Subsistence activities moved beyond the provisioning of the extended family and into the realms of supporting larger communities through the wider distribution of food. The specialists engaged in the production of other goods (such as potters, textile manufacturers, and metalworkers) and services (such as religious officials, soldiers, and bureaucrats) came to be concentrated in urban areas to centralize access to their customers. These specialized productive and service roles led to the foundation of stratified societies, with differences in wealth, power, and prestige, coalescing as hierarchical social groups: classes and castes. This typified the social order of states, with membership arising from economic activity and birth, bringing unequal access to basic necessities. For instance, with the greater production of surpluses and the ease of longer-distance trade networks, class distinctions become apparent in people's access to differing quantities and qualities of foods. Consequently, differentiated cuisines reflect the distinctions between social groups, together with more visible markers of social distinction, such as clothing and housing.

Indian cuisine is a differentiated cuisine, cross-cut by ties of caste, class, and regionalism, and yet also unified by the idea of the Indian nation. This type of cuisine demands a variety of ingredients and recipes, as well as the recognition of differences in eating habits between sectors of society, fostered by shared knowledge of those patterns through religion and public food discourses. Food becomes laden with social values and meanings, actively proclaiming the social order and, as will be discussed later, capable of offering unity in diversity through a pan-Indian cuisine (Appadurai 1988), discussed further in chapter 5. For instance, the region of Karnataka is regarded as part of the Western Coast culinary tradition. This tradition reflects local ingredients, such as seafood and coconut, and millet, which is used to make the flatbread, *jalada*. Fresh chutneys, from coconuts, mangoes, and aubergines are common, and a range of spices such as *sambhar masala*, together with chilies and tomatoes, cooked with sesame or peanut oil, add to the flavour principles (Pant 2010). Local cuisines such as this one are unified as Indian through primary staples, including rice and milk (and dairy products, such as

FIGURE 2.8
Backyard Chicken: This recent form of urban domestic egg production has brought new municipal rules and a debate about humane treatment and backyard slaughtering.

ghee—clarified butter—and yogurt), which are consumed by all castes. While rice is regarded as a high-status food, it is available to all and is considered to link people to each other as well as to gods through the offering of food as part of Hindu worship (Fuller 2004). Rice features in at least two out of three daily meals and is found at feasts and rituals, making its presence an essential aspect of Indian eating practices. The flavour principles of Indian cuisines similarly unify regional cuisines, and all rest on the variety of spices combined into *masalas* or mixes; chilies; and wet aromatics such as ginger root, onions, garlic, and tamarind. These characteristic spices have great antiquity, and they spread throughout the Old World by way of the spice trade. Tomatoes and chilies are relatively recent introductions, arriving from the New World through the Columbian Exchange, via the often forgotten influence of the Spanish and Portuguese on Indian society. This movement of domesticated foodstuffs and agricultural populations are the subject of the next chapter on mobile ingredients and global food production.

SELECTED READINGS

Keeping with the approach of classic single-sited ethnographic fieldwork, the following suggestions offer fine-grained insights derived from specific cultures' engagement with the environment, its food sources, and the global food system. These ethnographies, however, are situated in an interconnected global food system.

Holtzman, Jon. 2009. *Uncertain Tastes: Memory, Ambivalence, and the Politics of Eating in Samburu, Northern Kenya*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

The ethnography concentrates upon the pastoral Samburu of northern Kenya, and traces dietary change and the ability of food to mediate between the past and the present.

Paxson, Heather. 2013. *The Life of Cheese: Crafting Food and Value in America.* California Studies in Food and Culture, edited by Darra Goldstein. Oakland: University of California Press.

This ethnography on cheese-making in Vermont and Wisconsin skilfully uses anthropological insights to describe how people's lives are organized in relation to food production, and to provide a holistic portrait of the complexities of politics, place, history, and meaning-making. Among many lines of enquiry, it also tells of people's engagement with the species they rely upon—from herd animals to bacteria and moulds—and extends the ethnographic agenda into multi-species relationships, which are so apparent in human food production.

FIGURE 3.1

Guicoyitos Heirloom Squash: A mobile traditional Guatemalan crop exported to North America to satisfy consumer demands for exotic tastes.

CHAPTER THREE

MOBILE INGREDIENTS

Roots, Routes, and Realities of Industrialized Agriculture

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- *Trace the interconnected globalscapes of the food system. Note the influence of the Columbian Exchange on the production and consumption of foods.*
- *Describe the historical and ideological roots of industrial agriculture.*
- *Link the self-conscious creation of cuisines to the rise of nationalism and the processes of inventing tradition.*
- *Discuss the connections between wage labour and the proletarian diet.*
- *Explain the rise of industrial cuisine as part of the global food industry.*
- *Assess the costs and benefits of shifting to industrial agriculture for India, British Columbia, and Guatemala.*

INTRODUCTION

In the chilled vegetable and fruit section of a big-box supermarket, a mound of cellophane-wrapped Mayan *guicoyitos*, or heirloom squash (Courge Maya du Patrimoine), from Guatemala awaited selection. The rounded, green-hued squash crowded together in the package, and a label depicted a temple and lush, green, terraced gardens, ringed by volcanoes. Inside the header card, a recipe was included to help buyers transform the *guicoyitos* into sautéed squash with garlic, onions, and tomatoes—to add new meaning to a name, *guicoyitos*, and to domesticate an otherwise exotic ingredient through flavour combinations and a familiar style of cooking. I was tempted to make the purchase, because a few months earlier I had visited Guatemala to find out about the shifting nature of food production, the move from traditional to non-traditional crops, and how the highland Maya were dealing with the

changes. I had encountered a dish called *Guicoyitos rellenos* on the menu of a Guatemalan restaurant in the country's capital city: an authentic dish of the nation's cuisine. Now I had found this traditional crop—a plant species domesticated to meet the dietary and culinary needs of the Maya—for sale in Canada. As a food **commodity**, it had travelled along the route of non-traditional foods—French beans, English peas, and Italian broccoli—to tempt Western consumers with a new taste.

This bagged, mobile ingredient illustrates the changing dynamics of acquiring food, as people around the world have slowly shifted from localized self-sufficiency to inclusion in expanding spheres of exchange. As a consequence, people's food choices, which were once somewhat limited by the locality and its environment, are now almost unlimited, found on the shelves of supermarkets. Through a standardized retail system, we can buy many of the same global products, everywhere and in any season. Food travels from production (growers) through storage and processing (millers, refiners, and traders), to distribution (importers, exporters, brokers, and wholesalers), on to retail exchange (through markets, shops, supermarkets, and restaurants), and finally to consumption by individuals, directly into their molecules. This is now fundamental to our existence. How this came about, and what its implications are for people's food acquisition, diets, and cuisines, will be explored in this chapter.

IMAGINING GLOBAL ROUTES

The travels of mobile ingredients and flavours take us into the globalization of food, moving from the classic single-sited ethnographic approach of the last chapter and into the lives of foodstuffs through space and time. Globalization affects us all as we think of ourselves living locally, but in a global world. We know about world events, we listen to music and watch movies, we feel the impacts of economic downturns, and we offer aid to the victims of natural and human-made disasters. On a daily basis, we consume global products: commodities, made somewhere, and chosen to satisfy a need and to define ourselves. While this fact may not be "top of mind," the global food we buy and eat provides a direct, tangible, ingested link with distant places, peoples, and sometimes their cuisines.

To help untie the interconnectedness of the global food system, Appadurai's ([1996] 2008) conceptualization of globalization will be used (33). He provides a series of imagined global flows of people and things, ideas that populate and organize the everyday realities of life in settled places: globalscapes. The suffix "-scapes" builds upon the social and cultural construction of the landscape—the physicality of the environment made meaningful—to which can be added the **foodscape:** the site of food production, shaped by food-getting strategies, and home to wild and domesticated food species, settled cuisines, resettled foods, and people with their own culinary traditions (Ferrero 2002). The foodscape, as explored in this chapter, is

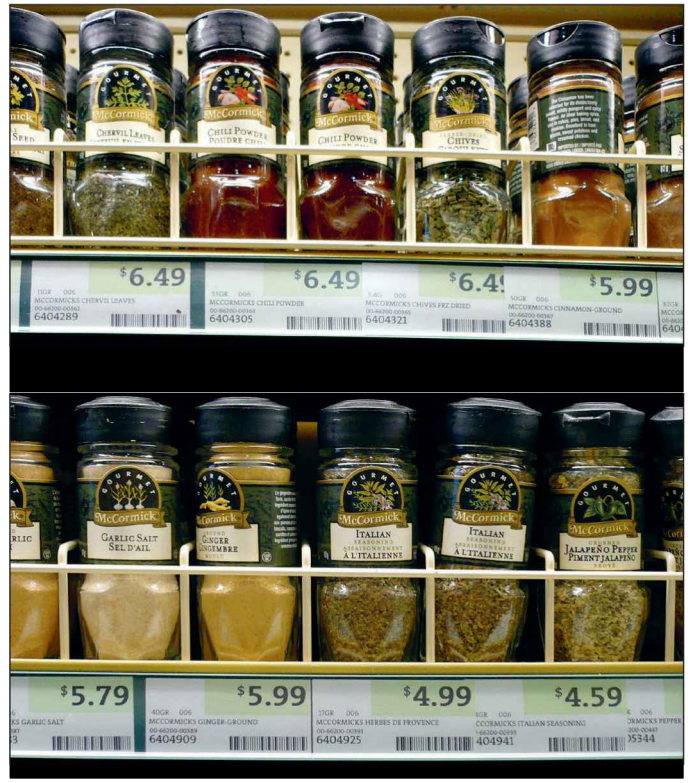


FIGURE 3.2

Supermarket Spices: These spices are the supermarket legacy of the ancient spice trade that changed the geopolitical organization of the world. Once luxuries restricted to the wealthy, they are now affordable and have become the familiar tastes of the world's cuisines.

where food leaves traces of complex departures and arrivals, mobility and settlement, where the localized growing, exchanging, and consuming of food intersects with global flows. The term "ethnoscapes" captures the flows of exploring and migrating people, who have carried portable foods on long-distance routes, transplanting species and delivering new edible resources, and consequently changing natural and cultural environments. The word "technoscapes" recognizes the spread of tools, industrialization, mechanization, and the capacity of innovation to harness energy to solve human challenges, and that of information technology to further connectivity. Think of the global presence of stoves, microwaves, and espresso machines. Lending momentum or force to global flows, witness the ideoscape of religious, capitalist, imperialist, nationalist, and neoliberal thinking that shapes the world's societies, together with alternative perspectives, such as environmentalism and communism. Today's emphasis on locavorism,

eating locally, is a facet of this flow. Financescapes make the economic world go round, and reflect the force of monetarism to power global change. The volatility of food prices is tied to this vast exchange system. Lastly, mediascapes—from entertainment to news—help us imagine ourselves as simultaneously at home and at large, alone and surrounded, and culturally in step with the world. The ease with which we can find information, pictures, and reviews of distant cuisines, dishes, and restaurants is evidence of media-driven foodism. Together, these 'scapes are occupied by the flows of people and things, given momentum by ideas and institutions, transforming settled life through real and virtual mobility, offering connectedness, and requiring adaptive responses from everyone involved. This chapter addresses these flows of ingredients and flavours through the interconnected 'scapes of the global food system, tracing the routes and roots of global foods, and the localized responses—change, accommodation, and resistance—costs, and benefits, through time and place.

LONG-DISTANCE TRADE ROUTES: SPICES AND EXOTIC FOODS

Since ancient times, humans have been involved in long-distance trade networks. The length of these—now described as commodity or food chains—has become the subject of considerable debate and concern, with the hidden energy costs, the carbon footprint, receiving critical scrutiny. This current discussion has spawned a localization movement: to *eat* food grown nearby (to be discussed in chapters 8 and 9). First, however, we have to explore globalization, how *foods* themselves travelled to become localized. The early extensive trade routes saw prestigious shells and obsidian travel great distances and provided access to scarce resources that were both socially and practically useful. Trade furthered the spread of domesticated plants and animals, and later advanced the flavouring of food, perhaps beginning with salt (Jones 2007, 144–47). The acquisition of salt has loomed large in history as people sought, fought, traded, and hoarded the salt they needed, especially once they had settled down to domestication. The diet of hunter-gatherers, with some consumption of meat, provided salt, but as people began to cultivate more cereals and domesticated animals, they needed to acquire salt for themselves and for the animals. Wild animals obtain salt from salt licks or brine springs, but once they are cared for by humans they need to be given salt (Kurlansky 2002, 9–12). Salt is essential in human diets, and its addition to food enhances the food's own flavours, but its preservative property was also important. Salting fish and meat added to societies' food security, by planning for consumption during times of scarcity. The presence of salted fish in Basque cuisine, for example, and the generally salty taste preference, attests to this flavour's origins (Shephard 2006, 62–94).

Other flavours, sugar and spices—including pepper, cinnamon (**Box 3.1**, Pondering Cinnamon), nutmeg, and cloves—became consumer needs, used to create entirely new flavours

FIGURE 3.3
Spice Cupboard Cinnamon: Worldwide, over 200,000 tonnes of cinnamon are produced annually and used to flavour both sweet and savoury dishes.

and, eventually, identify local cuisines. Used in relatively small amounts, yet able to impart strong flavours, spices were bankable commodities for early traders. Furthermore, being lightweight, packable, and less perishable, spices could be shipped long distances relatively cheaply but guaranteed a high return in the investment. Fortunes could be made from the spice trade, a fact not lost on the European colonial powers, such as the Dutch. The long-distance spice trade, originating in Arabia, India, and Indonesia, refined the tastes of Egyptians, Sumerians, Greeks, and Romans to include spices. Exactly how spices were marketed is not known, but they were embraced by the wealthy, surrounded with meanings about their health benefits. Thus spices were de-commodified, given meanings, and localized. Spices in the pan-European cuisine of the wealthy in the Middle Ages differentiated it from the bland, herb-flavoured porridges of the peasantry. The monotony of the agrarian diet was broken, for some, by flavours. Spices, at this point in time, were a status symbol in stratified European societies, enabling the elite to demonstrate their elevated tastes, and health (Owen 2002, 893; Fernández-Armesto 2004, 155; Czarra 2009, 47). It was not until the nineteenth century that the use of spices was democratized, and communicated the taste of an entire nation through defining its cuisine.

Later, in this national cuisine capacity, spices played an important role in domesticating other exotic ingredients, an important property of food flavouring to be discussed in chapters 4 and 5.

While spices altered the flavour profile of socially and, later, culturally differentiated foods, after 1492 the Columbian Exchange brought new exotic ingredients—animals and plants—from the New World to the Old World, and vice versa. This was a multi-faceted process, the climax of millennia of food globalization and domestication, which saw humans moving across the world, taking their food traditions with them and adapting to new environments (Foster and Cordell 1992; Kiple 2007). It was a process fraught with political and economic power, which changed people's livelihoods and diets, health and identity. Named after Columbus's "discovery" of new lands and resources, the exchange of exotic foodstuffs revolutionized people's diets, transformed tastes, and set the scene for today's globalized food system. The domestication of exotic foods into existing food traditions is a remarkable history of culinary creativity, changing tastes, and the shaping of cuisines. The marketing of exotic ingredients, whether deliberate or accidental, was so successful that many cuisines are unimaginable in their pre-Columbian form; the ingredients have localized to the extent that their foreign origins have been forgotten. From the New World came potatoes and sweet potatoes, peppers, tomatoes, maize, manioc, peanuts, pineapples, green beans, papaya, and chocolate; from the Old World came wheat, rice, bananas, sugar cane, olives, citrus fruits, mangoes, cattle, sheep, pigs, horses, and goats. In each location these new species became settled, were grown and eaten. The landscape was shaped to the needs of the new species; grazing animals, for instance, required deforestation, and people's lives changed as they tended new crops on plantations and in fields, and replaced old staples with new food choices. The foodstuffs were transformed, using existing food classifications and rules, then prepared, with flavours added, to turn them into recognized dishes. **Dietary transition**s occurred on both sides of the exchange; however, European diets were nutritionally enhanced, while the indigenous peoples of the New World suffered devastating dietary changes that compromise their health to this day. Huge population losses also occurred in the New World, jeopardizing the existence of many cultures. These changes are addressed in specific case studies later in this chapter.

The Columbian Exchange changed the global distribution of food crops, migrating species away from their sites of domestication to be grown and localized in distant places. The early exchanges involved epic journeys, months of travel, and many hands linked across continents. Today's commodity chains follow this pattern, but the speed, the quantities, and the quality of the mobile ingredients have increased. The food industry—heir to the Columbian Exchange—has developed a comprehensive distribution system that ships goods across great distances from sites of production to consumption. The questions of how today's food industry was established, and how food production was dispersed to global sites, take us to the industrialization of agriculture to produce greater yields, to feed the world.

BOX 3.1:
PONDERING CINNAMON: SPICED FLAVOURS

Cinnamon: a spiced flavouring that is now so familiar that its exotic origins and rich history are often eclipsed by its cheapness. In the fifteenth century, your cinnamon would be kept in a locked spice box, having cost you a small fortune, and you would use it sparingly not only as a flavour but also as a medicine. Cinnamon was reputed to strengthen the body, warm the stomach, expel gas, and increase the pulse (Estes 2000, 1540–4). Mystery surrounded its origins; twigs from a legendary bird's nest, and the scent of paradise, all gave the spice cosmological allure (Czarra 2009). This was a culinary marker of high social distinction, owned and used by people of great wealth and taste.

Its journeys through places and times is a dramatic story, tracing trade routes and the rise and fall of empires, such as Greek, Roman, Han, and Ottoman; linking Asia to the Mediterranean, the Middle East to Africa and Europe and beyond; linking religions—Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam; and fuelling the rise of capitalism and the ascendency of nation-states. Cinnamon is the taste of globalization. Spices are lightweight, not bulky, making them a perfect early global commodity: distantly produced, and consumed in the northern hemisphere. In ancient times, they could take over a year to transport; now that time span is a few weeks, at most.

Cinnamon is the inner bark of a tree species, and there are two types: true cinnamon, distinguished by multilayer sticks, which are softer and easily powdered, and the more common cassia, which has slightly rolled, hard sticks. Today cinnamon is produced in India, Indonesia, China, and Sri Lanka, and large spice corporations package and distribute it across the world. Supermarket spice displays are akin to a museum of the culinary globalization of the world.

Cinnamon's flavour is often associated with sweet dishes, but it is a versatile flavour. In the Middle Ages, in the pan-European cuisine of the wealthy, spices were used in all dishes, with no flavour distinction between sweet and savoury. From Italy in the fifteenth century, dishes with differentiated flavours began to appear and started a fashion, followed by the cooks of aristocratic houses, of gradually marking separate courses: savoury, followed by sweet desserts (Mennell 1996, 52–54). Cinnamon continues its sweet and savoury associations today in many national cuisines. After the Columbian Exchange, Spanish cuisine added cinnamon to chocolate from the New World, and it flavoured Mexican cuisine, including *mole poblano*,

continues…

box 3.1 continued…

the Mexican national dish (Pilcher 1998, 25). Paired with apple in desserts, or added to meat dishes, cinnamon is also found in Greek, Moroccan, Persian, and Lebanese cuisines. Here the capacity of cinnamon to communicate cultural meanings, and for the consumer to identify with a cuisine, are evident. It has been argued that "the widespread human tendency to season foods with recurrent, predictable combinations of flavouring ingredients can be seen as a cultural response to the omnivore's dilemma" (Rozin and Rozin 1981, 11). The familiar flavour tips the balance to pleasure, and marks the food as safe. Through the history of mobile ingredients, the use of flavour as part of a nation's culinary aesthetics has helped domesticate new ingredients and make them palatable. The next time you reach for the jar of cinnamon, think about the complexity of its existence, and its shifting values and meanings.

ROOTS OF INDUSTRIALIZED AGRICULTURAL: PLENTIFUL FOOD FOR ALL?

To untangle the complexities of the current global food system, a specific locality can be examined: Britain, which played a central role in establishing the current food system, and will serve to identify patterns that now typify food production, urbanized working life, and our access to available foods. These transformations can be understood as being influenced by intertwined causal factors—population growth, situated within the political economy of capitalism, imperialism, and nationalism; and the combined outcomes of industrialization, urbanization, migrations, and poverty. Each of these factors has sown a contemporary food system legacy, traceable through the subsequent pages of the book. These powerful forces profoundly affected people's lives and diets, and continue to define modernity, as witnessed by Guatemalans producing *guicoyitos* destined for the supermarkets of North America. In these events we can admire human ingenuity—the capacity to produce enough food to feed the world—and simultaneously question, and worry about, its environmental and social consequences, and our inability to share the bounty equitably. These worries will be presented at the close of the chapter in three short case studies.

Britain, like other countries, is a nation-state. A state is a specific form of political organization, based upon a territory, defended borders, and a centralized authority structure that governs the affairs of society. Nationalism is a political ideology that builds a strong emotional attachment to a place, its history, and a culture that binds together members of its society. It is actively fostered and draws upon many symbols, which represent a selective telling of the

FIGURE 3.4
Empire Apples at the Halifax Farmers' Market: The name of this variety of apple recalls the growing of food in Britain's distant colonies.

past, recalling only events and people that are meaningful to the present day. The creating of **invented traditions** involves many aspects of everyday life—from celebratory occasions, such as national holidays, to the ordinary, such as the food that is eaten. The actively shared and imagined belonging to a nation is part of the identity work of contemporary life, and its legacy is the creation of national cuisines, rooted in history and power relations (Wilk 2009). The food industry, through the formulation of branded products sold in shops and supermarkets, has been an important purveyor of culinary change and the acceptance of a nation's foods.

Britain's nationalism is deeply implicated in its history of establishing colonies, destined to be new homelands for settler societies. Colonialism was propelled by religious, economic, and political agendas to bring salvation, gain resources, and bring power and stability to northern European nations. The colonial societies cemented their own stratified social organization through bringing new wealth to merchants, consolidated the hold of landowners and the aristocracy, and furthered the poverty of the lower classes. Established colonies, through divide and rule, unleashed political and social instability that still disrupt many now independent nations' internal relations. Many European nations encouraged people to move from the Old World—some willingly, others unwillingly, such as slaves from Africa—ushering in

the greatest changes in human mobility ever witnessed. The twin ideologies of nationalism and colonialism established the Europeans as dominant forces in global political and economic relations, at the expense of the societies they came to control. This new world order—a system of core and periphery, colonizing and colonized states—is still evident in the inequities of the food system (Sorinel 2010). These are the forces behind today's mobility of people—migrants—and of ingredients, both moving from settled subsistence practices to distant places, where they resettle to foster a sense of identity—as members of another nation, and as ingredients in a cuisine. Consciously imagined cuisines of a settled people are a product of these linked historical and geographical events.

It is often presumed that agricultural intensification is a result of population growth, which demands a redoubling of efforts to produce more, to support a continually growing community that would otherwise face famine and catastrophic loss of life. It must be acknowledged that the two *are* intimately linked, but which was the cause and which the effect is still being debated, without any real resolution. Thomas Malthus's 1798 dystopian account of British society has driven this demographic debate and continues to influence global policy on development and on family planning to limit population growth. Malthus was an eighteenth-century theologian and economist who considered the ability of cultures to balance their populations with the productive capacity of the environment and their food-getting strategy. As noted in the last chapter, this balance was often successfully maintained. However, in Malthus's Britain, the population had grown, eventually more than doubling from nearly seven million people in 1750 to over 20 million in 1850 (Barker, McKenzie, and Yudkin 1966). There had been famines, and there was poverty; food insecurity was very real. From this evidence, Malthus concluded that there was a direct link between population growth and agricultural intensification, aimed at producing enough food but unable to keep pace with demand. Deaths through the resulting famine, Malthus argued, would decrease the demand, and food would become plentiful, boosting population growth and returning society to the brink of collapse once again, in an ever-repeating cycle. This became known as the **Malthusian Trap**. The scenario's argument is trapped by its biases. For example, he blamed famine and poverty on the inability of the poor to exercise restraint on family size, and hunger on their laziness and inefficient agriculture. He failed to acknowledge that some members of society, including himself, had plentiful foods. This naturalization of poverty, as the fault of a social group, has continued as an ideological assumption and extended into blaming individuals for their current circumstances rather than addressing society's structural inequalities. During Malthus's lifetime, agriculture had successfully intensified, substantially increasing yields through innovative techniques and mechanization, but at the same time, the stratification of British society deepened, limiting access and availability to food for the working classes. Fast forward more than two hundred years to 2015 Britain, where agriculture provides 52 per cent of the country's food. Annually, £96 billion is spent on food, but £12 billion is wasted, and over eight million people (15 per cent of

the population) suffer hunger on a daily basis (Taylor and Loopstra 2016; DEFRA 2017). The presence of poverty and hunger, which Malthus misunderstood, has now become so normal, despite agriculture's success, that it is often presumed to be a natural fact of human existence rather than the exercise of unequal economic power. To understand the continued presence of hunger, the roots of food insecurity—in Britain and globally—must be examined, and if the benefits of agricultural intensification, the yields, are unequally shared, should we be surprised if the costs are also unequally distributed?

Intensification changed British agriculture, irrevocably altering a millennium of small-scale subsistence farming, which concentrated upon livestock, and crops grown in the feudal open-field system. Gradually, into the eighteenth century, innovative changes such as the four-field crop rotation system shifted agricultural productivity, making the land capable of supporting more people. This was augmented by the arrival of the New World crop foods from the Columbian Exchange, which are thought to have contributed to a decline in infant and child mortality rates by boosting nutrition and conferring better resistance to previously deadly diseases (Kiple 2007, 143). Further changes in sanitation, hygiene, and medical practices also supported population growth. This intensification gathered steam in an industrial agricultural revolution, which, building upon the earlier domestication of wild plants and animals, saw the domestication of non-renewable energy sources—the fossil fuels of coal, oil, and natural gas—to transform human life. No longer dependent upon human energy, the new power sources mechanized production on a huge scale: in fields, to further intensify food production, and in factories, to manufacture consumer goods. This reliance on non-renewable resources has continued, with constant innovations offering technological fixes to boost productivity, promoting the superiority of scientific knowledge over traditional farming practices. This shifted the relationship with the natural world. For instance, from the early discovery that livestock could be fed turnips to see them through the winter came the development of selective breeding methods. Cattle longevity brought the opportunity to experimentally breed for useful characteristics, giving rise to new breeds of cows, named after people or places, with higher milk yields, adding to the efficiency of farming. Mechanical inventions, such as Jethro Tull's horse-drawn hoe and field drill for seeding, reduced the amount of human labour and transformed the landscape; fewer hedgerows and large, open fields allowed the equipment to operate unimpeded. Agricultural machinery demanded capital investment, affordable only for the wealthy, and large fields required changes in land ownership patterns. Since fewer workers needed to be employed, landowners took the opportunity to invest in acquiring land, which consolidated their hold over agricultural production and food surpluses. Common land, used by agricultural workers, was confiscated, and they were denied access to firewood, grazing for animals, foraging, and cultivating domestic food. As a result, the food security of many rural communities was threated, making hunger and famine a reality, despite successful harvests. From the 1750s, the British government legalized these ownership patterns through Enclosure

FIGURE 3.5

Strawberry Fields, Watsonville, California: Across North America and Europe, the hidden work of agriculture is carried out by legions of migrant workers.

Acts, undermining the livelihoods of thousands of rural people. Many faced the stark choices of starvation, emigration to the colonies, or moving to the cities. These formerly settled farmers were forced to give up food production and become mobile to survive. Yet, the rural depopulation required further agricultural intensification to provide food for the growing urban centres, the location of a newly profitable sphere: manufacturing. The rural migrants became a class of urban factory workers, many of whom teetered on the brink of poverty, forced to buy food, and suffering chronic hunger and malnutrition. This outcome—of hunger in the midst of plenty, the working poor—is still very apparent, both locally and globally.

A continuing challenge for any agricultural sector is to produce enough food for growing urban populations, despite a declining rural labour force and a finite land base (Spencer 2000). In nineteenth-century Britain, two interrelated solutions were found: first, grow more food elsewhere and import it, and second, artificially boost the productivity of the land. The overseas colonies of European nations like Britain became sources of food, where plantations could produce important energy foods, including sugar. The vast lands of Canada, the United States, Argentina, and Australia were transformed into wheat fields or cattle ranges, or fisheries where wild salmon was harvested and canned, and this food was imported to Britain. In the colonies, the growing of these cash crops took people away from subsistence activities, and contributed to their impoverishment and hunger. The crops were commodities, valued as a source of money, rather than food, which then had to be sourced and purchased from

elsewhere. This reliance on the importation of food from across the world has continued and is the foundation of the globalized food system.

The second solution arose with the creation of chemical fertilizers, which could artificially enhance the soil and allow fields to be used constantly. In the 1840s, German chemist Justus von Liebig discovered that the chemical composition of soil was nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium (N-P-K in periodic table symbols); this presented the opportunity to add substances to any soil to increase production. This was the agricultural equivalent of nutritional science; invisible chemicals held the secrets of life, growth, and health. Soil's nitrogen is essential for boosting agricultural yields, and it was naturally present through the mysterious work of bacteria on the roots of legumes—bean and pea species. Crop rotation built on this nitrogen fixing until Liebig's discovery, and then new sources of nitrogen were quickly identified. This included Peruvian guano (bird droppings), which Britain imported until the deposits were depleted in the 1870s (Smil 2001, 42). In the twentieth century, artificial nitrogen fixing was discovered through the Haber-Bosch process (named after its inventors). This has been called the most important invention of the twentieth century because it has revolutionized agriculture, and it is estimated that without it 2.4 billion people, or a third of the world's population, would not be alive today (Smil 2001, 204; Pollan 2007, 42–43). The heyday of chemical fertilizers began, and agriculture ventured into higher and higher yields, supplemented through selective breeding and intensive animal husbandry. This included confined penning, and eventually huge concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) and large-scale abattoirs, which moved animals out of sight, with "zero grazing" required, and weakened the intimate connection between people and domesticated animals. While such changes did produce more meat, milk, and eggs, the costs to animals—greater levels of cruelty—were hidden and will remain so until the public's ethical standards change. Today, further research on genetically modified species—both plants and animals—offers even quicker growth and higher yields, creating new food species and raising further ethical issues, such as the commercial patenting of life forms (Stone 2010). Other innovations include hydroponics, vertical farming, and the raising of insects, some of which demand high-energy inputs; as well, agroecological knowledge is being expanded, with the exploration of processes such as developing perennial wheat. Through two hundred years of remarkable innovations, more people are supported from British agricultural products on less land (75 per cent of 24 million hectares), while fewer people (260,000, less than 1 per cent of the workforce) make their living as farmers (Montague-Fuller 2014; DEFRA 2017). People still have to eat, but few consider farming as a career.

An important force behind these changes was the economic ideology of capitalism, with its notion of inevitable progress and its promise of a better way of life. In this system, progress is imagined as increased monetary wealth, bringing greater well-being, happiness, and success through consumption. Capitalism supports an intensified market exchange and is based on there being a demand for goods, such as those supplied by specialized workers, and consumers

who have the money to buy what they need and want. Food, such as sugar, becomes an important commodity, marketed to urban workers, traded in quantities, and processed into other foodstuffs that are designed to appeal to the mass market. Capitalism added greater competition to exchange by allowing prices to be manipulated—up and down—through access to cheap resources and more exploitative labour. Incubating since at least the seventeenth century, capitalism arose from long-distance trade and wealthy financiers (Robbins 2011, 68). It is based on the idea of making more money out of money, with capitalist investors, dependent workers, and an endless cycle of the production and consumption of commodities generating profits that can be further invested in promoting constant economic growth. Colonial and imperial expansion furthered capitalism's hold by providing access to new sources of wealth and opportunities to turn the world's resources to a profitable advantage for states and entrepreneurs. Many early investors or entrepreneurs who helped fund the "voyages of discovery" were nascent capitalists, and some became corporations, including the East India Companies of various nations, which traded in spices and other exotic ingredients. These corporations were able to act as national commercial entities, sharing capital and turning investments into profits. This model has continued with the transnational corporations of today, whose activities have centralized agricultural activity beyond the borders of states (Thu 2009, 14). Capitalism's success rests upon the economic system managed by states and wider organizations, such as the World Bank, which can regulate the flows of goods and capital to benefit all who have invested in the system. This is the ideology of the global financescape, and it underpins the food industry.

Capitalism involved a new form of work—waged—and a reorganization of how time is used (Thompson 1967). Work solves our basic needs, and in so doing we have divided activities, accorded them value, and begun to differentiate our society. For many small-scale societies—hunter-gatherers, pastoralists, horticulturalists, and small-scale agriculture—food-getting work was, and is, highly valued, since it delivers the means for all aspects of life. The daily pattern of activity centres on producing and often consuming food, and it must be accomplished for survival. The pastoral Nuer, for instance, talk of time as punctuated by events, such as milking and herding or, as Evans-Pritchard (1967, 101) called it, "the cattle clock." Within capitalism, time is precisely measured by the clock, and translated into a payment—a wage—in return for physical or mental labour to produce commodities that can be sold for a profit, rather than directly consumed by the worker. Wages came to be paid to agricultural, industrial, and service workers, but they were not equally distributed, and they entrenched a stratified, gendered division of labour, together with ideas about skilled and unskilled work, which continues to dog labour relations across the globe. Agricultural work became unskilled, which allowed landowners to pay farm workers minimally for their efforts, thereby devaluing the labour of food production. This trend of low wages has continued from the Industrial Revolution onward since, despite industrialization, there is still a need for agricultural workers

such as migrant fruit pickers. A further consequence of waged labour has meant that workers' lives have become regulated by work times, and that their activities must be "disciplined" according to the needs of commercial production (Foucault 1995). The language of time associated with capitalism—it is spent, wasted, saved—and the adage "time is money" attest to how important the regulation of time has become in industrial societies. Both waged labour and the constraints of a working life have changed people's relationship with food, bringing many to the point of buying most of their food and having less time to cook and eat it as a part of social and cultural life. Time poverty—when to buy, make, and eat—has shaped food consumption from the eighteenth century onward, demanding quick, convenient, cheap, high-energy foods. These became the basis of the proletarian diet, provided by packaged industrial cuisine sold in shops. This diet, and industrial cuisine, has become the global standard for workers, including poorly paid agriculturalists. This is dished up in detail later in this chapter, and digested throughout the book, since it has had a profound influence on contemporary food production, distribution, and consumption.

The place of work for many used to be in the vicinity of the domestic group. In capitalism, however, waged work takes place away from home, at a time-consuming, socially isolating workplace. Here, workers have become individualized, disconnected from the ties and responsibilities of kinship, which have receded into the private world of home life. This has changed people from being relatively self-sufficient producers into dependent, increasingly urban workers and consumers. Workers have to use their wages to buy their food and all other material aspects of life, such as clothing, some of which they themselves manufacture in factories. Wage labour, in factories or elsewhere, has taken women away from home production, exerting control over their time and undermining the rhythms of the household and its division of labour. This isolation of the household from production has eroded the value accorded to women's domestic responsibilities—such as shopping, cooking, mending, cleaning, and caring for a family—making them unskilled, and has profoundly influenced food consumption throughout the world. Women's lives have become harder, with work at home and for wages, and more invisible, as will be exposed in chapter 4. These changes have been described as "the culture of capitalism," which depends upon establishing independent households, occupied by **nuclear families**, who are increasingly mobile to find work, causing a weakening of kinship and community ties, and reshaping identity creation through consumption rather than production (Robbins 2011). However, the stratification of society has meant that households do not have equal availability and access to the same foods, and differentiated cuisines have became the global norm. Despite industrial agriculture's successes, food insecurity—the lack of enough nutritious food for health—still haunts the lives of many rural and urban populations, while the wealthy have plenty. The manufacturing of food for sale in shops, and later supermarkets, to provision the urban workforce was the outcome of agricultural

intensification. It is this rise of the commercialized food industry, beginning with markets, shops, and supermarkets, that is unpacked in the next section.

RETAILING FOOD: MARKETS TO SUPERMARKETS

The intensification of agriculture and the urbanization and industrialization of society shifted lives from self-sufficiency to dependency, moved people from rural to urban living, and made plentiful foods from many sources available. Waged workers needed to buy foods, which were manufactured and distributed by the food industry, and sold at shops and later supermarkets. This provisioning system is now standardized, and foods are marketed to suit widely different incomes, time constraints, and skill levels, and to appeal across class and ethnic boundaries. The journeys of mobile foods have become increasingly longer through the millennia, culminating in today's commodity chains replete with food miles. To travel such distances, food needs to be in perfect condition (hygienically and aesthetically), which requires sorting and processing and involves significant wastage (Gustavsson et al. 2011). Prior to extensive global provisioning, small markets served the needs of local communities, and these are still important—and gaining a market share with the rise of locavorism, unearthed in chapter 9.

Markets are physical places where surpluses are sold and buyers have access to a supplementary range of staple ingredients and luxuries, such as cooking oils, tea, coffee, salt, and

FIGURE 3.6
Rarotongan Market Stall: Farmer selling his garden's surplus papayas, taro root, coconuts, and bananas.

FIGURE 3.7
Parity Brand Canned Salmon: Canned salmon from the Pacific Northwest was a popular choice for industrial workers in Victorian Britain. The distinctively labelled branded cans proclaimed quality in a market of adulterated foods.

other consumer goods of more distant manufacture. Found in villages and towns across the globe, markets are known from the archaeological record to have existed for thousands of years (Jones 2007). Today, markets are essential in increasingly urbanized societies, such as Africa, where 11 cities report that 70 per cent of people rely on them for daily provisions (Resnick 2017, 52). A study of Tanzanian daily markets captures this vital role, and the marketing ploys of vendors intent on selling their foods (Flynn 2005). The town of Mwanza, with a population of over 200,000, has several markets, all selling the same locally grown staples: tomatoes, onions, rice, sweet potatoes, kidney beans, potatoes, plantains, cassava, wheat and millet flours, and wild fish. Each vendor has exactly the same goods, well known to the customers, all essential ingredients of the local cuisine, and all are eager to sell their products. Sales of these commodities are made through competitive pricing, slipping extras to regular customers, cheerful and humorous salesmanship, friendship, and—for some—the use of magic (Flynn 2005, 48–53). The local market is based upon face-to-face transactions, establishing lasting trading relations between vendor and customer, brokered through evidence of the quality and quantity of goods. Furthermore, markets are not only about commerce; they are also

important for forging ties between community members and establishing a collective identity. From a dietary perspective, market produce tends to be seasonal, helping to add nutritionally important variety, and potentially alleviating malnutrition.

Gradually the selling of food moved beyond the space of markets and was built into specialized shops—greengrocers, fishmongers, butchers, bakeries, or more generalized grocery stores—which became typical of urban centres in industrializing Euro-American societies. Eighteenth-century London, for example, had many urban markets, and shops selling foods to all classes of residents. These sold the ingredients of the differentiated cuisine of a stratified society: food for workers—the proletarian diet—and plentiful meats, cheeses, fish, fruit, and vegetables to grace the tables of the wealthy. Workers relied upon these retailers for the availability of dietary necessities, as long as they had the money. Today in many Euro-American societies there is nostalgia for the personal service offered by shopkeepers, but the reality of early food shopping may not have been particularly idyllic. For example, stratified societies are riddled with class conflict, and this is easily played out through shopping practices; the socially marginalized may fear that shopkeepers could defraud them by underweighing the goods or restricting access (Tolbert 2009). In nineteenth-century Britain, anonymity and demand, a competitive market, and a lack of government regulation allowed the adulteration of food to become rampant: adding alum to bread, plaster of Paris to flour, water to milk, and many poisonous chemicals to coloured confectionary (Wilson 2008). This led to a public outcry, culminating in 1875 with a requirement for all processed foods to carry a full list of ingredients, and the imposition of stiff penalties and government inspections, which made grocers liable for the quality of their products. Government intervention in public **food safety** issues continues today, as do the scandals: horsemeat, "mad cow" disease, and tainted baby foods. The question of consumer trust in the 1860s is apparent from an account of some British workers who bought a can of imported Canadian salmon and opened it at the shop to ascertain its quality (Ralston 1968, 40). Consumers came to rely on retailers to tell them the food was safe, because it was hard to gauge from looking at packages. Guarantees of quality became the marketing ploy of early grocery chains, forerunners of supermarkets, which advertised guaranteed brands, good prices, choice, and eventually self-service (Freidberg 2004, 41; Humble 2005, 28). The self-selection of foods was appealing, circumventing the personal politics of shopping and being served by a stranger, while still reassuring the shopper of the food's safety. Grocery chains suggested a class-free environment, where all shoppers would be treated the same and where all foods would be available, but access did depend on income. By the 1950s, the model of the supermarket, with its distinctive pattern of shopping, was established as a globalized, urbanized, convenient source of all food-related needs (see **Box 3.2**, Supermarket Shopping). The selection of products is global in scope and tastes; it can provide us with ingredients to cook with, to make our home cuisine dishes—if we have the money, knowledge, skills, and equipment—or it can cater to us with ready-made, time-saving foods: industrial cuisine, packaged and ready to go.

BOX 3.2:
FOODSCAPE GROUNDED: SUPERMARKET SHOPPING

This chapter directs attention toward mobile ingredients, the intensification of production, long-distance exchange, and the rise of urban life and the institutions of commercial food provisioning. We are all implicated in this history and its outcomes—shopping for food at supermarkets. This ordinary act is full of ideological significance (Patterson 2009). Within supermarkets, the global food industry of market capitalism has established a transnational culture of food shopping, identified by practices shared across cultures. From Australia to Zaire, supermarket culture centres upon concentrating multiple food choices in one place, classified by food types (meat, fish, vegetables, bread, for instance), varieties of ready-made meals (fresh and frozen), culinary activities such as baking, and household tasks like cleaning. As we browse the aisles, encounter new products, and make selections, we engage in our identity work within the broad patterns of gender, age, class, ethnicity, and nationalism, guided by the food industry's pleasant, rewarding, helpful, and efficient food-shopping location. The supermarket caters to different income levels, taste preferences, health and ethical concerns, cooking skills, and time management issues. As an institution of modernity, it has agency in shaping our relationship with food, for example, by offering ready-to-eat-or-heat meal choices, packaged like restaurant menu selections, and suited to the hunger pangs of many consumers' just-in-time shopping. The supermarket reflects and normalizes the social order, despite its quotidian status. Take a close look—participate and observe—in the supermarket, and consider the following suggestions:

- **Access** *to a supermarket is crucial. Consider the transportation options, and how customers arrive, to ascertain the inclusiveness of the clientele.*
- **Gauge** *the atmosphere with your senses: lighting, temperature, sounds, smells, and maybe samples to taste. What impression is created— wholesomeness, pleasant efficiency, thriftiness, or enticing gastronomic adventure? First impressions can guide the pace of the shopper.*
- **Watch:** *Who do you see shopping? Once supermarkets were directed toward women, and now gender roles are actively updated, paving the way for men to be normalized as grocery shoppers. Can you see the performance of gender through shopping?*

continues . . .

box 3.1 continued…

You will need to look carefully, consider costs, packaging, variety, and read the many non-verbal cues.

- **Draw a plan**, *and identify how food is classified and where it is placed. What can this tell us about the local cuisine, local cooking methods and skills, staple ingredients, flavour principles, and range of meals? Are there seating areas? Can you identify new trends in the supermarket's services? Is there evidence of crossover (for instance, a grocerant, i.e., grocer and restaurant)? Are online provisioning services available? What can these features tell us about people's changing relationship with food provisioning? Consider whether the* **nation's cuisine** *is evident, and look for foods that are telling of* **ethnic diversity** *and the culinary clues of a pluralistic society.*
- **Reflect** *on the supermarket's contents as evidence of the global foodscape, and how it is materialized in this one site of consumption.*

Industrial cuisine is the retailing format of the proletarian diet, mentioned earlier, which the workers of the Industrial Revolution consumed (Mintz 1985). It was supplemented by ready-made foods, including pies, and fish and chips, bought from street vendors in cities. This dietary change is a **nutrition transition**, one of several experienced by humanity, beginning with the shift from wild food to domesticated species, and then to increasingly refined, processed foods (Pelto and Pelto 1983). Each transition has affected people's stature, weight, and health, leading in this instance to increasing occurrences of chronic illnesses, or NCDs (Popkin and Gordon-Larsen 2004; Ulijaszek, Mann, and Elton 2012). The proletarian diet was a shift away from an agrarian dietary core of complex carbohydrates, fringed by small amounts of protein and vegetables, to a centrality of refined carbohydrates, with prominent sugars and fats, and small amounts of protein. Typical foods were white bread, which was often adulterated; jam, tea, and sugar; occasionally vegetables, such as potatoes; and, when money allowed, butter, cheese, fatty meat, and bacon—all of which cost two-thirds of a worker's income (Colquhoun 2008, 240–41). Very reminiscent of conditions in twenty-first-century Britain, nineteenth-century accounts provide harrowing insight into the meagre foods consumed by factory workers, who suffered from chronic health problems caused by malnutrition (Taylor and Loopstra 2016). Social reformers of the time called for better nutrition, but few workers could afford healthier food, and most had no access to kitchen equipment, and lacked skills and time. This diet was nutrient poor but energy dense to serve the needs of manual labour in factories, and the inclusion of wakeful stimulants—tea and coffee—offered some insurance against accidents due to fatigue.

Sidney Mintz's (1985) important work on this diet expressed early concerns about its causal factors—urbanization, industrialization, wage labour, and a workday schedule that dictates where, when, and what should be eaten—which has turned the diet into a global phenomenon. He predicted that it would jeopardize humanity's health, the environment, and the existence of distinct local cuisines, which would be replaced by "eating habits" that are unsatisfying, unleashing global gastro-anomie (Mintz 1985, 190–93, 213; 1996, 117). This outcome is chewed over in chapter 8. Furthermore, Mintz's work is important because he presents a systematic analysis of how the meaning of food is derived from the power relations of society, and given value by each social group. This transforms the proletarian diet (what people ate, based on biological requirements for energy and nutrients) into cuisine, surrounded with social and cultural meanings that become part of people's sense of individual and collective identity. Mintz particularly focused on the consumption of sugar, which was a central flavour and nutrient in the proletarian diet. It became a vehicle to communicate social status—class—and offers insights into the dynamics of emulation, conspicuous consumption, and the making of taste as a marker of social distinction. Sugar was a long-distance trade-route commodity, making it relatively rare and expensive. Consequently, access was restricted to the rich, and despite its limited availability they managed to publicly display large sugar sculptures, ironically known as "subtleties," to demonstrate their social standing. The control of sugar's production, importation, and sale became the source of wealth for the upper classes—underpinned by slavery and plantations. The social meanings of sugar were tied to the existing cultural food

FIGURE 3.8

Selection of Cakes for Afternoon Tea: The British sweet tooth is traditionally satisfied by many types of biscuits and cakes served for special occasions—and any other possible opportunity.

classifications based on medieval understanding of humours, dietary medicine, and later, as part of nutritional science as a source of energy. The conspicuous consumption of sugar by the wealthy turned it into a valuable status symbol, understood by all members of society; combined with the human liking for sweetness, its consumption became a desirable, emulative act for anyone. A relatively inert substance became a sticky issue of class, politics, and health. Through the industrialization of colonial plantations, sugar became readily available to all, affording the opportunity for workers to indulge in the pleasures of a former luxury—value-laden and meaningful treats. The workers were in many ways powerless to resist the sweetness that propelled the fortunes of those profiting from industrialization and capitalism: the wealthy (Mintz 1985; 1996).

Sugar can be understood as fuel for workers and as a source of profit for capitalists, but it became much more powerful than just a source of energy. For workers, the meaning of sugar lay in the taste and the social gratification of having access to a luxury. The rapid increase in sugar consumption can be traced to two linked processes: intensification and extensification. First, intensification concentrates the sensory, social, and emotional meanings of sugar, adding value to its consumption. Second, extensification provides more opportunities to consume sugar, in different foodstuffs, and on different occasions. For example, the ability to offer sugary cakes and tea to guests, or to have desserts as part of a meal, or to celebrate rites of passage, such as birthdays and weddings with cakes, all intensify the place of sugar as a marker of social identity and competency. The added weight of sugar's pleasurable taste and energetic boost, combined with the emotional satisfaction of the social gathering, worked to ensure sugar's enduring presence. Its extensification included its consumption across all times and activities of the day; from breakfast, lunch, supper, and snacks to tea or coffee breaks at work, and hospitable occasions of any sort: all of these could include sugar. British cuisine includes sugar as an ingredient, and sweetness as a characteristic flavour. Food manufacturers have been very obliging, making endless cheaply priced sugary products, such as sugar lumps, jams, biscuits, and confectionary, to fit these consumption opportunities (Mintz 1985, 152–54). This trend continues, with food-insecure British households in 2015 reporting increased purchases of cakes, buns, and pastries, together with confectionary—sweet treats to give life a boost (DEFRA 2017, 19).

Mintz's term "the proletarian diet" reflects its association with the working environment of capitalism, while Jack Goody (1982) explored its relationship with the rise of the commercial food industry's role in provisioning the urban industrial workforce and shaping differentiated cuisines by class and ethnicity. Goody coined the term "industrial cuisine" to describe the range of culinary creations of the food industry, made from staple ingredients such as corn, wheat, and sugar, grown on an extraordinary scale and manufactured into other foodstuffs. He argued that the food industry created a cuisine of processed, standardized, packaged, and branded convenience foods that are sold everywhere, to anyone, allowing the same products

to grace the tables of the upper and lower classes in Britain (Goody 1982, 173–74). In this capacity, the food industry has created a cuisine identified by its mode, scale, and versatility of production—industrial—rather than on its specific ingredients, flavours, methods of cooking, dishes, and eating patterns. Brillat-Savarin's "Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you who you are" aphorism is made meaningless in the face of industrial cuisine. It has colonized and commodified global culinary traditions, and sold them across the world, conveniently packaged for long-distance travel. The placement, packaging, labels, and brands are all concerned with making meaning, marketing the food for consumers, directing cooking, and determining consumption. These meanings do help consumers de-commodify products, turning the retailers' exchange-value into a personal use-value, and turning consumption into a means to articulate a sense of personal and group identity. However, the long-term consequences of industrial cuisine on people's health (NCDs) are a global issue. Yet, as a powerful source of identity work, consumption choices can also be used as acts of resistance and rejection of the dominant food system; consumers can boycott specific products and retailers, and resist marketing messages, as discussed in chapter 9. The roots of industrial food production—in our British case history—and complex, long-distance trade routes of ingredients have brought us to the well-stocked shelves of markets, shops, and supermarkets. These promise food security, which, however, can only be realized by those who have the income, time, and knowledge to make nutritionally, socially, and emotionally satisfying choices. The benefits of the global food system are not equally available, and the costs are also differently shared, as explored in the next section.

EXPORTING INDUSTRIAL AGRICULTURE

British industrialization of agriculture gave rise to the commercialized food industry, and wrought transitions upon people's lives: migrations, livelihood shifts, dietary changes, dependency, and deeply entrenched social differences. In keeping with any nation's history-making, the successes are championed over any failures, and the presence of poverty, homelessness, and hunger are often presented as aberrations rather than systemic problems. Consequently, attention is diverted to the centuries of very real improvements in people's living conditions: sanitation, housing, medical care, nutrition, longevity, education, women's and children rights, and state provision of social services and support. Through these achievements a successful, "First World," "core," "developed" nation has emerged, which offers many privileges and opportunities to its citizens. Britain, among other Euro-American nations, has come to represent a societal model that is presumed to have much to offer to the world—such as industrialized agriculture. This attitude can be traced within the transnational institutions of global governance and the furthering of the global economic system.

In 1944, motivated by the turmoil of World War II, world leaders met at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, seeking to establish a stable global economic system. The conference had laudable goals: to repair the damage of the wars, and to bring optimism, progress, and opportunities to distant nations. Rather ethnocentrically, it was modelled on the presumption that Western societies offered *the* desirable way of life, which could be achieved through innovative scientific technology and economic development. This attitude relegated all other cultures' ways of life to the category of "backward" and in need of "progress." It was in part influenced by a much-debated phenomenon called **demographic transition**, which suggested that the industrialization and urbanization of the "developed" world had successfully stabilized population growth. This charted a gradual decline in population growth, resulting in replacement-level fertility (enough births to compensate for deaths, creating a relatively stable population) or, in some instances, below-replacement-level fertility (fewer births than deaths, causing population decline). The explanations for population stability or decline are still poorly understood, but the fear of population growth and food insecurity has long caught the attention of social thinkers, such as the aforementioned Malthus (Johnson-Hanks 2008; Robbins 2011, 147). Yet the influence of this demographic observation has extended to economic policies directed at the developing world, the Global South, where, it is argued, population growth can be slowed through economic inclusion in the capitalist system. Economic development, according to this argument, will bring increased prosperity and reduce the need to have as many children. The Bretton Woods plan was organized through the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), eventually culminating years later in the World Trade Organization (WTO). A key, on-the-ground UN agency is the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), whose mandate is to fight hunger and poverty through agricultural development and international trade agreements. These institutions represent global ideoscapes and financescapes, existing beyond the control of individual states, and they seek to loan money and expertise to develop the world's economy by profoundly linking all state economies together, and to facilitate stable currency exchanges that will allow the free trade of commodity imports and exports. This system is based upon the principles of free trade and sustained economic growth, and has a neoliberal agenda—extending capitalism by lessening state intervention and fostering privatization. Each nation-state has become a venue for transnational corporations' business, conducted using state resources, which include people and the environment, and facilitated by trade agreements to allow the flow of goods and capital without too many restrictions. This means that while each state has responsibility for its citizens and environment, each is also beholden to the global economy, which brings foreign investments that can endanger existing national businesses, working practices, subsistence, the environment, and many aspects of everyday life. While stability was the intention, precariousness has become the norm. The less wealthy states in the world system have been particularly subject to the demands of the global economy, and indeed their current political status is linked to this system.

Wealthy states are able to maintain their dominance by exercising control over the system, and the poorer states are locked into a peripheral status due to their indebtedness to the world financial institutions. Beginning in the 1950s, the World Bank loaned money to developing nations for megaprojects, such as dams, roads, and railways, all designed to build infrastructure for economic development. Problems arose, however, when interest rates on the debts were more than many states could afford, causing the World Bank and the IMF to offer new financing terms, conditional on the state governments' making structural adjustments in their own societies. These structural adjustments called for the devaluation of the currency, increased taxation, and reallocation of state funds away from health care, education, and social programs, and into debt payments (Robbins 2011, 87). This propelled many nations into exporting raw materials, welcoming industrialization, and exploiting workers, which deepened poverty and malnutrition, and caused wider gaps between rural and urban life, and rich and poor people. The work of the FAO brought agricultural intensification through the Green Revolution, to boost crop production that promised to end hunger. This was the global community's solution, a promise to feed the world and bring food security. This exported model of industrial agriculture can be summarized as follows:

- *Uniformity based upon monocropping, and changing the environment to suit the specific range of high-yielding crops, offering multiple opportunities for consumable products: animal feed, biofuel, and human food.*
- *Large-scale production to facilitate fulfillment of the feed-the-world mandate, and serve the long-distance trade routes necessary to globally distribute products and retail food supply. The use of "economies of scale" concentrates production to lower costs.*
- *Feed the world cheaply through lowering food prices, while generating profits.*
- *Economic endeavour to enhance business and employment opportunities at sites of production and beyond, consolidating global corporations, and furthering national governments.*
- *Research and development to find new solutions to intensify productivity, such as seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, and antibiotics.*

The promise of this system is now questioned (see chapter 8), because it has meant the loss of food security and sovereignty for many states, and has forced many people away from self-sufficient subsistence practices and into dependency and wage labour. These states have become the sources of cheap raw materials and labour, bringing benefits to distant consumers of cheap food and goods, few of which reflect the true social, ecological, ethical, or economic costs of production.

India, British Columbia, and Guatemala will provide three short case studies of industrial agriculture, and showcase the changes that are taking place—akin to those of eighteenth-century Britain: new technology to allow intensification, changing ownership of land, rural

to urban migrations, emigration, industrialization of manufacturing, reliance upon purchased foods, inadequate diets, and greater food insecurity. There is also an increasing reliance upon chemical fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, antibiotics, and new genetically modified seeds and species, which promise to solve food shortages (Barlett 1987; Thu 2009). These can be assessed positively and negatively—benefits and costs, unequally distributed—depending upon their impact on the stakeholder—farmer, government, investor, or activist. The case studies bring the industrial agricultural model down to the ground—and to the lives of people involved in producing food for world food security rather than their own subsistence needs. Industrial agriculture is well established, but its successes and dangers are now being critically assessed. Its failures, and the FAO's reassessment of industrial agriculture, will be forked over in chapter 8.

India: A Green Revolution?

Through the years since independence in 1947, successive Indian governments have grappled with managing the agricultural base of society, ensuring enough food security, and enabling India to enter the world economic system. While agriculture in Indian villages embodied the essence of independence with the Gandhian concept of *swadeshi*— the autonomy of the village—successive governments neglected agriculture in favour of promoting industry. This saw a decline in agricultural productivity, a rise in food imports, and eventually an economic crisis that unfolded in the 1960s. The Green Revolution beckoned as a solution, offering a means to increase agricultural productivity without sacrificing industry (Kornmesser 1997). This revolution began in the 1940s and 1950s in Mexico, where a team of US scientists worked to hybridize wheat to produce high-yielding varieties. This work represented the harnessing of chemical and biotechnological knowledge to further intensify agricultural production. The new seeds quadrupled Mexican wheat production in two decades, and they unleashed the Green Revolution as a plan to enhance agricultural productivity and alleviate food insecurity across the world (Pilcher 1998, 113–14).

Across India the Green Revolution has divided communities into wealthier and poorer farmers and created regional disparities—without alleviating food shortages, especially in the rice-eating south. It sought to draw upon new technology to boost yields of existing crops by introducing new seed varieties. But it has increased the usage of artificial fertilizers, causing nitrogen runoff that has created dead zones in rivers and coastal waters (Smil 2001, 206). Many of the new varieties are less pest resistant, demanding the constant use of pesticides; these create health problems for agricultural workers, who do not always follow safety recommendations. Seeds and chemicals require money, pushing many farmers to take on debts that cannot always be repaid, resulting in bankruptcies, loss of farms, and suicides. The decline in the use of local seed varieties and the practice of monocropping are eroding the biodiversity of wild species of fauna and flora. The greater demand on water for irrigation can disrupt

local distribution systems and substantially deplete natural resources. Despite these impacts, the revolution continues, but not without mounting resistance. Indian rural resistance goes back to the old cultural value of *swadeshi*—self-sufficiency—and it has spawned many new activists since Mahatma Gandhi's call for independence from Britain. In the 1990s, Vandana Shiva emerged as a champion against capitalist agrarian reform, denouncing the foreign multinationals' patenting of crops as the theft of Indian farmers' intellectual property. In 1999, to protest against Monsanto, many farmers—including some in Karnataka State—uprooted their genetically engineered crops (Shiva 2000, 119– 22). This invasion of Indian agriculture did not help rural farmers, who had to compete on the open market for grain prices—lowering their incomes substantially, and pushing many to bankruptcy. The crops were not suited to local needs but to those of industrial processing, and for chemical companies to sell more and more fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides (Kornmesser 1997, 127). The unrest continues; thousands of farmers have committed suicide, and mass protests are staged across India to force the government to provide agricultural support (Kakodkari 2017).

We can turn again to the village of Bijapur in Karnataka State, South India, to see how "modern agricultural methods" have affected the traditional system, which had successfully adapted to the drought-prone region (Vasavi 1994). From the perspective of government agronomists in India, this region was ripe for intervention because the traditional system was low in productivity and thus "backward." Modernization brought new hybrid seeds, systematic land use, application of fertilizers and pesticides, and irrigation. The existing religiously based system of land use was to be replaced by adding "NPK" to the soil, abandoning the tried and tested intercropping practised by generations of farmers. A loss of autonomy resulted, forcing the farmers to follow the rules of outsiders, which devalued their local knowledge. Science and economics furnished the rules, bringing about a gradual secularization of agriculture. Rituals grew less frequent, and instead of the goddess Laksmi and the earth itself, irrigation pumps became the recipients of offerings, prayers, and veneration. Furthermore, the presence of agronomists, health and government workers, together with the market orientation of production, shifted the value of agrarian life. Villagers began to buy new goods and look to the urban centres as sites of the modernity and prosperity to which they should aspire. The older members of the village used the hybrid seeds as a metaphorical commentary on themselves and the changes they had witnessed. Their own seeds used to be valued, and the crops were strong, while the hybrid seeds were described as delicate, susceptible to disease, and in constant need of costly inputs—just like the Bijapur villagers, who now needed to buy things they had not needed in the past. They went from valuing their locality, autonomy, and strength to an outlook concerned with quantity, dependency, and weakness (Vasavi 1994).

British Columbia: A Blue Revolution?

Industrial agriculture is not confined to land-based food production; it has also extended to the world's oceans and rivers, which have sustained cultures for millennia. Nor does it just concern plant species, and in this instance, we can consider its impact on animal life experiences and welfare. Many subsistence fisheries concentrated upon coastal waters until the advent of the Industrial Revolution brought steam trawlers capable of the deep-ocean harvesting of wild fish stocks. This led to bigger fishing fleets and floating factory processing vessels, culminating in overfishing. The ability to accurately predict the scale and well-being of many ocean species still eludes science, and it has proven difficult to implement fisheries strategies (other than moratoria) to ensure their sustainability (Cohen 2010; Probyn 2016). With public awareness of health issues surrounding meat consumption, fish has witnessed a rising global demand; for instance, 146 million tonnes of fish were consumed in 2016, making industrial **aquaculture** the fastest-growing food-producing sector in the world (FAO 2016a). Aquaculture is an ancient practice, but the development of artificial feeds in the 1960s, and the use of plastic for pens, netting, and piping, brought an "uncontrolled expansion," with marine shrimp leading the way in Asia (Nash 2000, 464; Lien 2009, 65–80). At present, aquaculture's

FIGURE 3.9
Packaged Wild Salmon: Stickered supermarket salmon, addressing consumer demand for certified sustainable choices of fish.

blue revolution relies upon six major "crops"—salmon, trout, carp, tilapia, shrimp, and oysters—and more than 100 other species (Nash 2000, 466). This has been touted as a sustainable enterprise; however, it has opened up a polarized debate between its advocates and activists concerned by the associated ecological degradation that is jeopardizing traditional subsistence practices (Kimmett 2008; 2009).

Industrialized overfishing and aquaculture have impacted coastal First Nations of British Columbia, whose traditional food-getting strategy has always relied upon wild salmon. The ability to continue to fish for wild salmon and other sea-based food sources is an Aboriginal right, yet it is constantly challenged. In Canada, the federal government's Department of Fisheries and Oceans created a distinction between a "food fishery" for Aboriginal people only and a "commercial fishery" open to non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal fishers with government-issued licences. The commercial fishery began as a means to provide canned salmon for urban workers in industrializing Britain. For First Nations, the limited catch "allowed" for food fishing failed to supply enough salmon, which are instrumental in every aspect of life—social, religious, economic, and political—not just a source of nutrition. Consequently, the decline of wild salmon across the Pacific Northwest, due to overfishing and climate change, is felt most fiercely by First Nations. The Council of the Haida Nation (2005, 10) reports that it is not always possible to catch enough salmon for single families, let alone large public feasts, and that "the sockeye are a shadow of their former abundance." Ocean-penned fish farms are implicated in the decline of wild salmon species, but several transnational corporations have obtained federal government leases in the territorial waters of First Nations. Growing global consumer demand for more fish, especially omega-3-rich varieties, and for **sushi**, has made fish farms economically viable. The domesticated Atlantic salmon have been bred for growth in any waters, making them "universal biogenetic artefacts," simultaneously global (reared anywhere) and local (freshly "caught") in the nearby waters of British Columbia, Tasmania, Scotland, Norway, or Chile (Lien 2009, 68–69). For many First Nations, the wild Pacific salmon and the Atlantic salmon are given different meanings, with the latter not valued as a food fish. The contrast between the fish is captured by one 'Namgis man's comment: "Sockeye is really firm because it's a strong fish, it's been swimming for four years so it's got a lot of muscle. But these Atlantics they grow so fast, they don't swim around, they get no exercise, they just eat, eat, eat, that's all they do. No, you would never be able to smoke them the traditional way, barbecue them the traditional way at all" (quoted in Schreiber 2002, 368).

The continued importance of wild salmon for First Nations is regarded as a form of resistance to change, expressed as a decolonization strategy to eat the right food—including wild salmon—and follow traditional practices, allowing the past to guide food choices today (Schreiber 2002, 375). Toward this goal, and to assert **food sovereignty**, the Haida practise their own fisheries management, monitoring recreational fisheries, operating a wild fish hatchery, and carefully harvesting wild food sources. Yet, as a viable economic endeavour

some First Nations, such as the 'Namgis, have begun their own blue, but sustainable, revolution. This is a land-based tank aquaculture, widely regarded as environmentally safe, and as a strategic economic response that provides important revenue for the community. The Atlantic salmon are marketed under the trademark *kuterra*, combining *kutala*, the 'Namgis word for salmon, with *terra*, for land, and drawing upon cultural symbols to appeal to consumers as an indigenously sanctioned, sustainable fish product.

Guatemala: Guicoyitos Food Miles Away

The packaging of *kuterra* salmon brings us back to Guatemala and the culturally localized packaging of *guicoyitos*. Like many other indigenous peoples, the Guatemalan Maya were co-opted into the globalizing food system, beginning with the Spanish in the seventeenth century. New food species—coffee, then bananas—were resettled as plantation crops, grown on vast areas of clear-cut forest, planted with single species. As export agriculture became established, the indigenous Maya were dispossessed of the best lands, which were consolidated in the hands of a few wealthy families or corporations, such as the United Fruit Company, which by the 1930s exercised control over 70 per cent of arable land. The Guatemalan Civil War—*La Violencia*—decimated families, communities, and severely compromised people's relationship with the land and the traditional ways of life. Since the 1996 Peace Accord, life has been gradually beginning to return to normal, and while some of the inequity of land allocation has been addressed, it is certainly not resolved (Fischer and Benson 2006, 38; Daub 2007). Many of the traditional *milpa* plots—family-owned, subsistence garden plots—are now not big enough to support a family's food needs unless they are intensively farmed, and this has pushed more people into wage labour on coffee and banana plantations so that they can afford seeds, fertilizers, and supplementary foods. The continuing pressure from the World Bank and IMF for developing nations to embrace export-oriented agriculture has reinforced the production of non-traditional crops—okra, broccoli, French beans, baby corn—and turned some traditional crops, such as *guicoyitos*, into commodities (Daub 2007, 47). While the *guicoyitos*-to-squash food route covers many miles, and follows paths managed by transnational corporations and global governance institutions, it is possible to link the two ends—the Mayan producers with the North American consumers (Inglis and Gimlin 2009; Fischer and Benson 2006; Fischer and Victor 2014). Ethnographers have looked at how the Guatemalan Maya have reconciled the presence of the global system within their own cultural patterns of kinship, family, earning a livelihood, and parents' hopes for the next generation. This is neither capitulation nor resistance, but the pragmatic decisions to achieve "something better"—*algo mas*—just as everyone does. The Maya are not victims of globalization; instead, they are making sense of the new opportunities that participation in the global economy brings. The "something better" is about holding onto their land, growing non-traditional export crops, acquiring more income

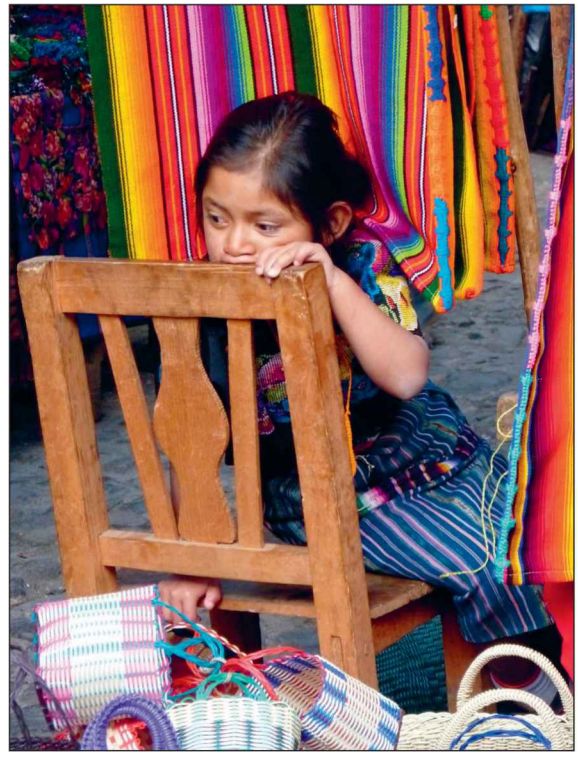


FIGURE 3.10
Guatemalan Child at Chichicastenango Market: By diversifying their livelihoods to include export crops, farmers look to their families' futures.

to support their families, and enabling their children to go to school, do more with their lives, and build the local community (Fischer and Benson 2006, 4, 47). Farming the *milpas* builds upon existing agricultural knowledge and skills, and follows traditional labour patterns involving the entire family. This is a strategy to resist other alternatives, such as having to go to work on a *finca* or plantation, in urban centres, or in *maquiladoras*, garment factories. To further this enterprise, local cooperatives have formed to allow community members to pool their resources and work together to access land, and to attract export contracts for their non-traditional crops (Lundy 2007). The non-traditional agriculture "converges with local cultural logic" and sees Mayan farmers "rechanneling capital flows in the service of their own self-conceived futures" (Fischer and Benson 2006, 61–62).

At the other end of the food route—North America—shoppers will notice the visual appeal of the food, its perfect aesthetics, glance at the label, evaluate the price, consider taste preferences, gauge time constraints, imagine combinations of other ingredients and flavours,

and make a decision—to place the *guicoyitos* in the shopping cart or not. The shoppers are searching for ingredients for meals to share with their families, desiring to buy health-promoting, reasonably priced, contaminant-free food, and, for some, ethically sound foods (Fischer and Benson 2006, 13, 80). There is risk involved for all participants in this food chain: the shoppers are anxious about pesticides, global social and environmental sustainability, and animal welfare, while the Mayan growers fear failure, aware of the precariousness of their existence—of no income and no food, since *guicoyitos* and other export crops take land away from their subsistence farming. They grow some export crops, such as broccoli, which has not been localized as food, and much is wasted if it is deemed to be aesthetically imperfect for the Western market (Fischer and Benson 2006, 30; Gustavsson et al. 2011; Yates-Doerr 2012, 308). While this example provides evidence of adjustments and rationalizations made in the shift from subsistence to export agriculture, it must not be forgotten that the lives of Guatemalans now hinge on the global food market. Their continued success depends upon the environment, which is prone to increasingly violent storms, drought, and volcanic eruptions, and to the fluctuations of the global market, such as oil prices. The costs and benefits of the global food system are constantly being weighed up on both ends of the journeys of mobile ingredients and flavours, as these foods organize the lives of distant people. The recipe on the package of *guicoyitos* leads us to the next chapter's exploration of the social life of food as it is cooked, and transformed into the culturally meaningful dishes of cuisines.

FIGURE 3.11
Supermarket Shopping: All the world's food systems exposed in a single shopping cart?

GRIST FOR THE MILL

SELECTED READINGS

Leinfelder, Reinhold, Alexandra Hamann, Jens Kirstein, and Marc Schleunitz, eds. 2016. *Eating Anthropocene: Curd Rice, Bienenstich and a Pinch of Phosphorus—Around the World in Ten Dishes*. Translated by Julie Hagedorn and Jonathan Lutes. Berlin: Springer.

Taking the theme of intensive food production using fertilizers, this book presents a series of comic book illustrations to examine the essential role of phosphorus in global food production. Phosphorus is a finite resource that requires careful management to prevent depletion. This crucial issue is the book's focus, told through the stories of global foods, recipes, and postcards from the future—2050.

Wilk, Richard, and Livia Barbosa, eds. 2012. *Rice and Beans: A Unique Dish in a Hundred Places*. London and New York: Berg. https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350042223.

Following a dish—rice and beans—this edited book of readings considers the history of global encounters and the contemporary outcomes.

Du Bois, Christine, Chee-Beng Tan, and Sidney Mintz. 2008. *The World of Soy*. Urbana, Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

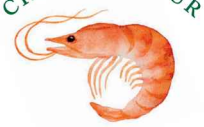
In a similar vein to the previous suggestion, this book provides an historical and ethnographic overview of global use of the soybean, including examples from South America, Africa, and Asia.

Errington, Frederick, Tatsuro Fujikura, and Deborah Gewertz. 2012. "Instant Noodles as an Antifriction Device: Making the BOP with PPP in PNG." *American Anthropologist* 114 (1): 19–31.

This article addresses how instant noodles have been marketed to, and embraced by, "bottom of the pyramid" consumers across the globe, especially in Papua New Guinea. The research provides evidence of the allure of industrial cuisine, and the ways in which multinational corporations are using instant noodles to groom Papua New Guinians, and others, to become consumers of all manner of goods, not just food, thus shaping consumption patterns to ensure sales of their products well into the future.

FIGURE 4.1
Guatemalan Women Cooking: Companionable cooking in the kitchen of a roadside *comedor* near Flores, Guatemala.

CHAPTER FOUR



COOKS AND KITCHENS

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- *Describe cooking techniques and culinary aesthetics.*
- *Examine the consequences of food-getting strategies for cooking techniques and gender roles.*
- *Recognize the importance of interpretive models to understand cultural meaning-making.*
- *Identify the ideological construction of cooking and gender in Western societies.*
- *Describe the origins of men's public cooking and the shaping of national cuisines.*
- *Assess the ideological role of the food industry, and the acceptance of industrial cuisine.*
- *Re-evaluate the quotidian connotations of cooking.*

INTRODUCTION

Rural Guatemala, on the road to Flores: two women are making tortillas in the kitchen of a *comedor*, a no-fuss roadside eatery. The rustic kitchen has a concrete floor, wooden counters, and big metal bowls full of homemade dough, made from *masa harina*, waiting to be shaped and cooked. The young women, wearing immaculate aprons, work companionably, moving from counters to stove in a repetitive pattern in time to the rhythms of rock music playing from a radio. The concrete woodstove has metal griddles, heated in readiness to cook the tortillas, and a large pan of stew simmered alongside. The tortillas are handmade, shaped and patted, with gentle claps, and put onto a metal griddle to cook. With perfect timing, the tortillas are watched, flipped, and quickly piled, ready to be served. The smell of the wood smoke, the sound of the patting of the soft corn tortillas, the chatter of the two women, and quiet rock music, are familiar Guatemalan sights, smells, and sounds. The tortillas are served with a meaty stew, rice and beans, and fresh salsa, as lunch for passing travellers and locals.

This is a scene repeated the world over: women quietly cooking together, transforming ingredients, through methodically performing learned techniques, into recognizable food. Daily cooking continues what has been learned from mothers and, hopefully, will be passed on to the next generation. Making food is central to women's important role of supporting each other, their families, and society. It is one of many household responsibilities often dismissed as "quotidian," ordinary, and ignored in comparison to dramatic cultural practices. Yet this essential everyday act defines omnivorous humanity as "cookivores"; we universally cook our foods, which has helped shape us physically, socially, and culturally. "Cooking," according to Brillat-Savarin ([1825] 2009, 283), an early French gastronome, "is the oldest of all arts … for the needs of the kitchen were what first taught us to use fire, and it is by fire that man has tamed Nature itself." Using the language of his times, he identifies the important story of cooking, concerning hearths and kitchens, cooks and gender roles, cooking knowledge and embodied techniques, and the shaping of cuisine: all the ingredients of this chapter.

THE ORIGIN OF FIRE USE AND COOKING

The origin of fire use, and its associated cooking, has long fascinated people, bringing explanations in the form of mythological traditions and scientific theories. The human ability to harness fire was the first act of domestication, which exerted a profound influence on our anatomy and society, and on the earth (Pyne 2001). The mythologies of many small-scale societies captured the significance of controlling fire, and its use for cooking, as an act marking people as distinct from other creatures. Myths are sacred narratives explaining how things came to be the way they are, and they often place supernatural beings at the centre of creation, with lesser powers and meddling humans acting as peripheral agents. Fire origin myths range from its accidental discovery, receipt as a gift, or its theft. For example, myths from the Kayapo, and their neighbours in Amazonia, recall the adventures of two men who were hunting for macaw nestlings. One man was abandoned by the other; left alone and vulnerable, he was rescued and befriended by the jaguar—a significant supernatural being—who simultaneously introduced him to fire and cooked food. When the man returned home, he taught others about his newfound knowledge and tastes (Lévi-Strauss 1969, 66–73). An Australian Aboriginal myth tells of two women—Kangaroo-Rat and Bronze-Winged Pigeon—who secretly owned fire and selfishly concealed it in a nutshell. Other animals sent spies to watch the two women, uncovering the secret of cooking—fire—and hatched a plot to gain its power. They invited the women to a dance, and while they distracted the women, the animals stole the fire. The nutshell was opened and the fire spilled out, burning grass and bringing fire to the trees. The fire could then be freed from the trees by anyone who rubbed the wood together (Mudrooroo

1994). These myths celebrate the liberation of fire as a tool for all humans, and the consequent enjoyment of cooked food as a profoundly cultural act.

Moving from mythologies that place cooking within the realm of the supernatural, we can turn to science, which draws upon empirical evidence to make sense of human activities. Archaeologists have identified the evidence of fire use throughout the ages, and have excavated many cooking sites, adding significantly to our understanding of human culture. Fuelled by the nature of the archaeological remains, there is disagreement about exactly when humans began cooking. The paucity of early archaeological traces of fire use is explained by humanity's small population size and the temporary nature of fires, making for a low frequency of these being found in the record. There are sites from over a million years ago, such as in Chesowanja, Kenya, that for some provide "provocative hints" of human control of fire (Wrangham 2009, 85–87). The appearance of distinct hearths that have been used again and again, however, is clear evidence of human control of fire and cooking with its associated debris. Hearths—such as at Kalambo Falls, northern Zambia—can be identified from after 200,000 years ago, when modern *Homo sapiens* appeared. Hearths indicate that people actively transferred or initiated fire when they needed it, rather than relying upon wild sources, such as lightning or volcanic eruptions (Jones 2007, 77–78). Once acquired, fire needs to be tended, akin to other domesticates, demanding new skills, responsibilities, and cooperation among its owners.

Cooking has practical, sensory, and social outcomes, all of which underscore its importance. A practical outcome is that cooking makes food safer to consume by killing parasites and neutralizing toxins. Cooking's role as a form of external pre-digestion serves a physiological purpose, making foods softer and more easily absorbed, and nutrients more rapidly released. At a sensory level, cooking adds further tastes to foods through the release of simple sugars and the intensification of additional flavouring ingredients. The release of cooking odours alerts the senses, stimulates appetite, and provokes anticipatory memories of previous meals. Cooking transforms the textures of food from a raw state, beginning with cutting or grinding, and then applying heat, all lending a familiar appearance and mouth-feel to habitually consumed foods. Socially, cooking involves cooperation to acquire the ingredients and flavours, the fuel, and the equipment; to tend the fire; and finally to share the food. Easily digestible cooked foods help infants to wean and provide sustenance for elderly people as they age, making cooking vital to the social support extended to dependants (Jones 2007, 79–82). As Wrangham (2009, 152) says, "The culinary act … creates foods that can be owned, given, or stolen." It begins the significant act of eating, rather than feeding. This outcome of cooking makes it instrumental in building social relations, a sense of community, and cultural identity. It is the lynchpin of humans' division of labour, which ended the individualism of pre-human foraging and brought people together to share their acquired ingredients. With this recognition of cooking's place in human society, it has been rehabilitated as worthy of academic study, beginning with its basic techniques.

COOKING TECHNIQUES

Following Charles Darwin's observation that cooking and language were humanity's greatest advantage, we can make some comparisons between these two universals (Darwin [1871] 2004, 68). Just as all humans have distinct geographically located languages, we also have distinct cuisines, and both depend upon a culture's environment, adaptation, and history. Recognizing that each language has a universal structure, as does a cuisine, allows a linguistic analogy to frame cooking techniques, as grammatical rules, used to transform raw ingredients (sounds) into food (words), which become culturally meaningful dishes (statements) of a cuisine (specific language). Just as we learn our language through experience, intuitively coming to know the rules, and gradually expand our vocabularies, in much the same way we learn to cook, and as we age we may refine our skills and expand our repertoire of dishes. Cooking is task-centred techniques centred upon the person's perceptual, conceptual, logistical, and emotional responses (Short 2006). It is embodied skills, the physicality of movements and senses, which are unconsciously engaged while performing learned culinary techniques, such as chopping, stirring, and gauging whether a food is ready. Each cook works within a cuisine's recognized range of techniques, flavourings, and dishes, while adding their own style, just as spoken language rests on a person's own voice and word choice, shaped by syntax, cadence, and accent to effectively communicate. A speaker verbalizes a language, whilst a cook materializes cuisine. As with any language, a cuisine will change, creolizing new ingredients, using culinary techniques to incorporate them into the existing pattern of meaningful dishes, without jeopardizing its identity (Wilk 2006). Cooking, like language, is a vital, communicative, human characteristic, involving the skilful use of a variety of techniques to create a cuisine of culturally meaningful foods that serve nutritional needs, foster social relations, and enable the performance of identity.

At its practical level, cooking is a universally shared activity, exhibiting cross-cultural variation, but generally it involves the application of heat to produce an irreversible change (Lehrer 1969, 41). More accurately it also includes all the preparation: the processing of raw ingredients to transform them into the recognized food of a culinary tradition. The basic techniques of cooking can be organized in the following three broad categories of change wrought upon ingredients (Goody 1982, 47). These offer a suitably cross-cultural understanding of cooking, including all techniques, not just applying heat (Rozin 1983, xii–xiii).

1. Physical Change: The processing and preparation of ingredients through such techniques as grating, grinding, milling, pounding, peeling, chopping, and slicing; all alter the shape of the foodstuffs, making them smaller and more manageable. The size will be influenced by the intended outcome (making flour for breads, for instance) and by practical requirements, such as finely chopping ingredients so that they cook quickly, thereby saving fuel, as in Chinese

cookery (Anderson 1988, 183–85). Examples of physical change also include squeezing juice, pressing oil, separating eggs, churning milk, and rendering fat. A further physical change comes with combining or mixing ingredients, whipping, stirring, or beating to change the texture and density of the substance.

2. Water Content Change: Involves adding to or removing the water content of the foodstuff through the judicious use of liquid. This includes marinating, soaking, adding flavoured liquids, and lengthy curing in brines and acids to preserve food. Curing dispels the water content and replaces it with the curing liquid. The ancient methods of salting, smoking, and drying all reduce water, preserving foods for storage and imparting flavour. Smoking uses fire, wood and peat, and the medium of air, not to heat food, but instead impregnate it with a preservative fumy residue, adding distinct flavours. Freezing, traditionally used in the Arctic, prolongs the storage life of food, and with the invention of refrigeration and freezers has now become a global process.
3. Chemical Change: This is probably the most familiar aspect of cooking, as it includes the use of heat—but it also includes fermentation. Fermentation enlists yeasts, moulds, and bacteria that transform natural sugars into other compounds, such as lactic acid and alcohol, slowing spoiling, and adding flavours. Another ancient technique, it produces leavened breads; cultured dairy products such as yogurts, kefir, and cheeses; brewing spirits such as wines and beers; and condiment sauces, such as soy and fish sauces. The use of heat is divided according to its intensity: direct exposure, used in grilling and roasting; and indirect exposure, used in baking in ovens. Heat is also applied through two major media: water, and fat or oil (see **Box 4.1**, Pondering Fats). Water is directly involved in heating food through boiling, simmering, and poaching, and indirectly through steaming. Fat or oil is directly involved in deep-frying and stir-frying, and indirectly when combined with other liquids, as in braising and stewing.

These basic techniques are the foundation of all cuisines, but employed in slightly different ways to produce culturally familiar food. Cooking is a process of cultural meaning-making. As ordinary as these techniques—the activities of home and professional cooks— appear, they carry important ideological assumptions about what women and men do and what food should look like as part of a cuisine. This is the practical performance of social norms, the weighty sets of ideas about how things should be, which individuals conform to (or resist) in their daily behaviour. Any society's culinary discourse is the public chatter about cooking techniques, equipment, the practical knowledge and advice needed to make a meal. It is shared informally or formally, by family, friends, and professionals, and works to disseminate the implicit ideological assumptions carried by food as well as giving voice to dissenting alternatives. The culinary meaning-making process uses cooking techniques to change the appearance of foodstuffs and gives them sensory values and associated cultural meanings. The changes

BOX 4.1:
PONDERING FATS: GREASING COOKERY

The use of fats in cooking is not a necessity, but it has become an unspoken expectation of many recipes. Few kitchens will be fat-free places, but the types of fats will vary by cuisines, culinary needs, and sometimes dietary restrictions. Perhaps "Tell me what fat you cook with, and I'll tell you who you are" is a reminder of the associations between fat and identity work?

Our liking for fats can be traced to our evolutionary history, the demands of bipedalism, and our energy-expensive brains. Fats are hidden substances, found in the subcutaneous deposits of animals, and concentrated in the matter of seeds, nuts, and fruits. Fats are an essential macronutrient, used for energy and slowly released to sustain people's efforts. We don't need too much, and all fats pack a hefty calorie load: 9 calories per gram—more than sugar. Despite this, or perhaps because of it, cross-culturally, fat is a desired substance. Long eaten as part of animals or plants, it has also been rendered, pressed, extracted, and agitated from its sources. Refined fats have different properties, and these have been instrumental in shaping their culinary uses, and cultural evaluation. As a medium of heat transfer, fats cook food at much higher temperatures than boiling water, exacting greater chemical changes on the food. Each type of fat has a different "smoking point," useful for both the low- and high-temperature cooking required by different ingredients: fast, high-temperature deep frying with peanut oil; or slower, lower-temperature sautéing with butter. Kitchen cookery fats are divided into temperature-dependent solid fats, often derived from animals (butter and lard) and liquid oils (such as olive oil and rapeseed oil). Fats contribute significantly to the culinary aesthetics of food, affecting its appearance, changing its colours, textures, and flavours, and contributing to the sense of fullness the food delivers. The presence of fats moved cooking into the realms of differentiating dishes within cuisines. For instance, the creation of sauces depends upon an emulsifying fat, to carry the ingredients and lubricate a dish with rich flavours. Invisible fat, when it becomes one with the dish, is found in dough and pastry; the type of fat used adds "shortness" or flakiness to the pastry.

The culinary fashion for fats has changed through time; settled cuisines relied upon locally sourced fats: butter in northern Europe, olive oil around the Mediterranean, and coconut, palm, and seed oils across more tropical areas. Now all cooking fats are industrially produced, and travel the world, to serve multiple

continues…

box 4.1 continued…

culinary needs in a single kitchen. How many fats are in your kitchen, and what does this say about your culinary repertoire? Health concerns from the 1940s implicated saturated fats in rising blood cholesterol levels and ushered in the low-fat crusade for trans fats: plant-based margarines, which were later found to have no greater benefits. These have been usurped by the health claims made about extra virgin olive oil, which is a staple of Italian and other Mediterranean cuisines. Saturated fats have been rehabilitated for some, and we are seeing butter and coconut oil re-entering the frying pans of global kitchens. The public culinary and nutritional discourses have clashed; cooking with fats shapes food's culinary identity, but eating too much fat can have health implications (Phillipov 2016).

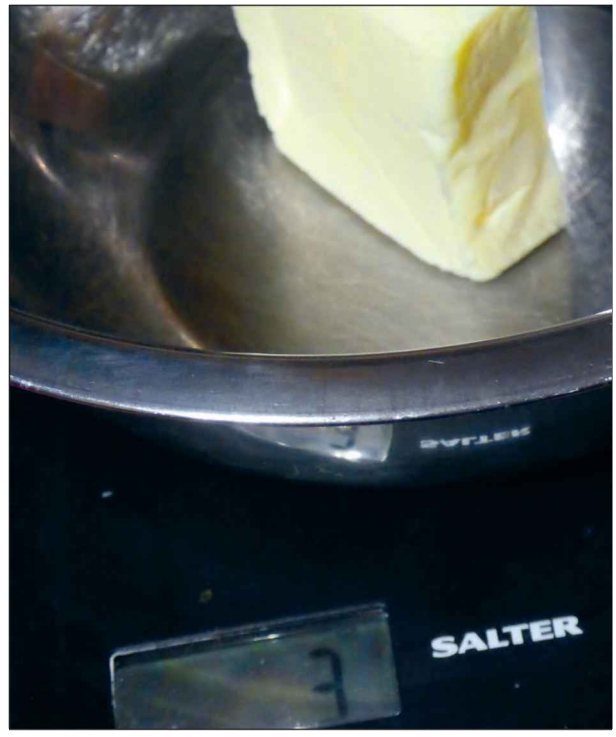


FIGURE 4.2

Three Ounces of Butter: Made by churning milk and "ripened" through bacterial fermentation, butter furthers the life of milk and is used as a medium for heat transfer in cooking.

concern food's sensory nature—its colours, textures, smells, flavours, and sounds—all communicating cultural messages, often unconsciously understood. These sensory combinations form the aesthetic code of cooked food that marks its culinary identity. Flavour, for instance, has been identified as particularly instrumental in defining culinary **authenticity**, demanding careful additions, and alerting the consumer to the familiar and the exotic (Rozin 1983, 2007; Sutton 2001). The fact that food looks and tastes like it belongs to a particular cuisine rests upon the skills of a cook and imparts meaning for the consumer. Cooks whose knowledge and skills make daily meals are at work across every continent, and their culinary style is located within the demands of life wrought by the environment, and ways of making a living. To bring the process of culinary meaning-making home, we can revisit food-getting strategies to explore how people cook in different places, and begin to think about the ideological ramifications of cooking.

COOKING AND FOOD-GETTING STRATEGIES

It is important to think of the extensive range of cooking techniques that happen around hearths, and domestic and professional kitchens, because it reinforces the place of cooking as a habitual, essential, and complex skill. Mobility, ingredients, storage, time constraints, and equipment profoundly influence cooking techniques, and all are tied to the food-getting strategies of everyday life. Each food-getting strategy patterns cooking, making it a meaningful part of life, and yet it is often overlooked. Take a moment to consider how your own cooking changes when you are in an unfamiliar kitchen, camping, or barbecuing in the yard. Think of what foods you could cook, what equipment you will need, how long it will take, and who will do the cooking. Use your ethnographic imagination to lend comparative insight to these case studies, and consider what is familiar, and what differs from your own experiences.

To return to the Australian mobile small-scale hunter-gatherer Martu, we can consider cooking with fire: the use of heat to effect chemical change. Here, cooking involves impromptu fires and the use of hot charcoal and an earth oven, combining brief grilling, singeing, and baking. Men's roles include butchering and cooking kangaroos at the kill site, and then bringing the cooked meat back to the camp. Each specific cut of meat will be shared with kin, according to their relationship with the hunter (Tonkinson 1991, 45). Cooking outdoors is a given in many small-scale societies, but your imagined scenario probably does not involve lighting a fire directly on the ground. Perhaps you can share the skills of grilling particular foods—maybe not a kangaroo, but sharing tasks and serving charred offerings? During daily foraging, Martu women and children also build small fires, enjoying ash-grilled small game as fast, convenient snacks. Women do the majority of food processing, using portable equipment, to avoid the burden of carrying heavy utensils. For the Martu and other hunter-gatherers,

mobility, freedom from storage facilities, and the availability of resources make food processing and cooking an ongoing, as-needed part of their daily routines. The only time constraints concern waiting for company to share cooking and eating, which reinforces the cooperative and egalitarian nature of society. Men, however, do cook for special feasts associated with "men's business" of the Dreaming, paralleled across many cultures. For small-scale hunter-gatherers, cooking is at the heart of life, a sociable act, regarded as a valuable and important task undertaken by both men and women.

Where foods are more plentiful and capable of preservation for storage, as among the delayed-return hunter-gatherers of the Pacific Northwest Coast, daily processing and cooking is a vital activity. The semi-sedentary existence in permanent village sites meant that people could accumulate a greater range of stored food and cooking equipment, and allowed for the emergence of more elaborate cooking techniques and recipes. In ranked societies, the cooked food reflected the social order, with greater quantities and foods with rarer qualities given to guests with different social statuses. Much like in your own cooking scenario, plentiful ingredients would come from household stores, or special ingredients would be cooked in honour of guests or the occasion. The range of traditional techniques was indicative of the complexity of the cuisine, and the elaborate culinary aesthetic system. These included changing the water content of the ingredients—such as gutting salmon, filleting for smoking, cutting into strips for wind drying, and boiling and pulping berries and fruit to be formed into dried cakes. Fermenting salmon roe, a chemical change, and altering the physical forms, including rendering grease from oolichan (or candlefish) to be used as a flavourful condiment, were all important learned cooking skills. Cedar- and alder-wood fires provided the direct heat for grilling and roasting fish and meats, as is still done today at First Nations' salmon barbecues. Traditionally, indirect heat, in the form of earth or pit ovens, was another method of cooking, often used when larger feasts were being catered. Boiling and steaming using bentwood boxes and tightly woven root baskets was another method, and with the arrival of iron pots, the wood and root bowls and baskets were gradually replaced. Women were especially important in the processing of food, initially for storage, and then for cooking following culinary aesthetics. Both cooking and eating were highly prestigious social and political acts, anticipated and talked about as part of daily life. This clearly reflected the social differentiation of the society, just as the range of equipment, ingredients, and cooking skills you rely upon are telling the social order.

Imagine yourself constantly on the move, but having to cook daily meals, and contemplate how this would change your style of cooking, and eating. Pastoralists particularly feel the demands of mobility, and have responded by reducing equipment and cooking times. The Nuer, being seasonally mobile, do have a range of gourds, clay cooking pots, grinding stones, granaries, and brewing pots that are found at permanent village sites. This is where lengthier food preparation takes place, such as brewing millet beer and storing grains for use through the year.

FIGURE 4.3
Traditional Salmon Barbecuing at Old Massett: The sockeye salmon are split open, skewered on split cedar, and angled toward the open fire.

Wood is limited for the Nuer, and it is used for cooking fires, while dung feeds all other fires (Evans-Pritchard 1967, 86). The preparation of millet porridge, milking, and cheese-making are women's responsibilities, and they feed their families—husband and children—in their own household, or camp, but sharing food between households is common (Evans-Pritchard 1967, 84). Cooking requires an efficient use of fuel, and consequently the staple food—milk—is drunk without cooking, while foods, such as porridge flavoured with cheese, are boiled, and others, blood and fish, are roasted on an open fire. Daily cooking is very definitely associated with women, and men distance themselves from engaging in such a domestic task. Men take on the responsibility of cooking meat, which is rarely consumed, and accorded great significance by many pastoralists, since living animals are the mainstay of their existence. If meat features in your scenario, most likely you bought it ready butchered, distanced from its living form—indicative of differing cultural values (see **Box 8.1**, Pondering Meat).

Horticulturalists' sedentary lifestyle, necessitated by tending their gardens, has created the conditions for more elaborate cooking techniques, including the use of earth ovens. Earth ovens are found across the world, and one anthropologist offers building instructions as an alternative to the suburban barbecue that may be worth experimenting with (Sillitoe 1997, 224–31). Perhaps in your scenario the speed of cooking, using a stove, features prominently, since we are used to almost instantaneous control of temperature. Unfamiliar stoves can provoke anxiety—uncooked or burnt food. Now imagine using an earth oven. What skills will you draw upon? The basic procedure is digging a pit, lining it with leaves; then heating stones in a fire, placing these at the bottom of the pit, and layering in foodstuffs according to cooking time; and finally closing off the oven with mounded earth. The cooking time is about an hour and half for a small pit, depending on the cut of any included meat. This type of oven takes us back to the Trobriand Islands, where men cook pigs for feasts in earth ovens and boil taro pudding after important funerary distributions of women's wealth (Weiner 1988, 29, 89). Women's daily cooking is on open fires, or now stoves, where they boil yams, taro, and sweet potatoes for family meals. For Trobrianders, cooking transforms food that was displayed as wealth, destroying it, but making people richer through giving it away to others (Campbell 2002, 28). Women's cooked food is shared among close family, while men's is shared on a wider social scale to create social support networks, which perhaps recalls a cooking experience within your own social network and the distribution of "doggy bags"?

In societies based on industrial agriculture, with an urbanized population, shopping for food dominates, and household storage has become a priority, because the demands of waged work have reduced the time spent on food work. You may be most "at home" in the kitchen of this food-getting strategy, with a stove and all "mod-cons," but you'll still need to manage the appliances, look in the drawers and cupboards before cooking in your culinary style. As an example, we can consider cooking in Britain, where techniques have become continuously more elaborate, using a greater range of equipment, demanding greater skills, more recipes, increasingly diverse ingredients, with a broad array of resultant dishes. Cooking has become more private, more technologically supported, and yet still demanding of embodied knowledge and skills (see **Box 4.2**, Kitchen Gadgetry). This is typical of cooking trends in any Western industrial nation and is supported by the market economy and the global food and manufacturing industries. In British kitchens, all the universal techniques of cooking can be used, allowing women and men to cook across the world's cuisine and remain within familiar culinary territory. For example, contemporary cooking in Britain includes Indian, Italian, and Chinese dishes, and those of traditional fare, including bangers and mash. These will conform to British culinary aesthetics, with roasting accorded high value—and the "Sunday joint" the legacy of a long-term liking for meat. Overcooked, boiled vegetables are another characteristic, a textural style that may be a throwback to the medieval cosmological theory of humours, which regarded raw vegetables as harmful and thus in need of thorough cooking (Spencer

2000, 1221). These culinary preferences are the British "accent" given to universal cooking techniques. However, culinary attitudes do change through time, with crisper vegetables now more widely accepted. British cooking is still vital, practised with differing degrees of skill and enthusiasm, and in terms of normative gender, age, class, and ethnic roles, huge social

BOX 4.2:
FOODSCAPE GROUNDED: KITCHEN GADGETRY

The kitchen is now the most technologically laden room in a house, featuring large appliances: stoves, refrigerators, ranges, and ventilation fans. This is the standard equipment of cooking, fresh storage, and expelling cooking smells. On countertops, or in hidden cupboards and drawers, are often many small hand appliances and tools suited to a variety of food preparation techniques. These have all been described as labour saving, but a question remains about the truth of that claim and whether we really need so many. Furthermore, many appliances carry implicit ideological assumptions about gender and cooking, and assumptions about culinary standards and aesthetics, i.e., that homemade food should look like professional cuisine. To test these propositions, explore your kitchen gadgets. These can be small or large, powered or hand tools, but all will suggest a particular specialized function (or two).

- **Inventory** *the gadgets you own, or have access to, and make a note if they are frequently used. Storage patterns might be a clue about usage.*
- **Choose** *two gadgets: one that is frequently used, and one that lies discarded in a cupboard or drawer.*
- **Identify** *the tasks the gadget claims to accomplish.*
- **Align** *the tasks with basic cooking techniques of physical, water content, and chemical changes of food.*
- **Locate** *these tasks within the cook's cuisine, or repertoire of cuisines.*
- **Describe** *each gadget, its design, ease of use, and cleaning requirements.*
- **Assess** *its usefulness in accomplishing the tasks, and whether the cook is pleased with the results.*
- **Reflect** *on whether the tasks could be accomplished manually. Are the gadgets gendered in any way? Does this change the pattern of use? Was the gadget acquired to save time, or to make a particular style of dish? Has the gadget changed the cook's style of cooking?*

expectations surround its competent performance. Despite this social weight in Britain and elsewhere, the meaning of cooking has changed; it has been reinvented as a chore, with convenience the antidote, which lessened the value of the embodied knowledge and skills of home cooks. These Western meanings surrounding cooking have now travelled widely through the global ideoscape, influencing cooking across many societies. Before addressing how cooking's reputation has changed, and the ideological construction of gendered cooking, a brief foray into anthropological interpretations of meaning is needed.

BEYOND CULINARY TRIANGLES: TOWARD CONTEXTUAL MEANINGS

The act of cooking is surrounded by cultural meanings, rooted in cosmologies, such as those found in myths, and operating as part of a society's ideology. These meanings are learned, talked about as discourse, taken for granted by members of a culture, and used to organize daily life. Anthropologists work to understand these meanings, the content of ideologies, and how they are used in a society. This involves the interpretive models of theory, making sense of culture, which have been refined through the decades from all-encompassing grand theories, such as Lévi-Strauss's structuralism, to recent acknowledgment of the complexities of life confounding our ability to neatly capture all circumstances in one definitive model. Despite this realization, interpretive models do bring insight, and recently more flexible, hybrid models do justice to the multiple sets of coexisting meanings used in any social context. Your understandings of cooking and its meanings, and how they inform your attitudes and actions, are part of this ideological construction. You will have been listening to and participating in the public culinary discourse, shaping your knowledge and ideas. Your ideas will overlap, and differ, from those of your friends, family, and strangers, and anthropology's aim is to understand how this system of meaning works, and present it as an applicable, comparative model. In this section, we can explore some of these models, and gain valuable insights, without jeopardizing the ideological complexity surrounding all aspects of food, not just cooking.

As discussed, each culture follows different food-getting strategies, but all are united by the fact that we humans process our ingredients—in other words, we cook them to make food. It is this universality of cooking that fascinated anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, who regarded cooking as a demonstration of the control of culture over nature, its techniques distinguishing humans from animals. Humans, he argued, do not have to cook their food; we choose to as a symbolic statement about our unique status in the natural world. This was at the heart of his structuralist analysis of cooking techniques—a search for the deeper, universal meaning of cooking. In Lévi-Strauss's words, "Not only does cooking mark the transition from nature to culture, but through it and by means of it, the human state can be defined with all its attributes" (1969, 164). His culinary triangle model demonstrates how raw natural

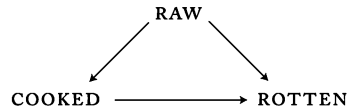


DIAGRAM 4.1 Culinary Triangle

ingredients are transformed into cultural food by cooking, or become rotten through a natural transformation (see **Diagram 4.1**).

The culinary triangle was extended to include more specific techniques: boiling, roasting, and smoking—to qualify cooking. Lévi-Strauss considered the application of heat through fire—roasting—which he believed to be the most natural; and the mediation of water—boiling—which he designated as cultural, because it involved some sort of receptacle. To roasting and boiling Lévi-Strauss added smoking—heat mediated by air—which also required some sort of device to hold the raw ingredients as they became food. To further the utility of the model, he took the triangle into a third dimension—the culinary tetrahedron—adding grilling, steaming, oven-roasting, and braising and frying, mediated by fat (see **Box 4.1**, Pondering Fats). Ultimately he argued that the whole complex system of oppositions, affinities, and mediations would reveal the universal meaning of cooking, applicable to any culture, anywhere. The core meaning was the distinction between nature and culture, a foundational opposition, located in humans' binary cognitive structures—that we universally think in oppositions, which structuralism saw as fundamental to organizing human culture (Lévi-Strauss [1968] 1997, 35). The culinary tetrahedron model, for Lévi-Strauss, stood as applicable to cooking anywhere, and he asserted that a universal meaning underlay all of any specific culture's cooking techniques. While the fundamental transformation, raw to cooked, nature to culture, is an enthralling idea, to reduce all cooking down to one meaning is to miss the many meanings that people can articulate and draw upon in their daily lives. Lévi-Strauss's model was challenged, sympathetically and humorously applied to reliable accounts of cannibalism, but failed to live up to the predicted correspondence between roasting and dead relatives, and boiling and enemies (Shankman 1969).

Instead of the theorist imposing the model, as Lévi-Strauss's work illustrates, others let members of a culture talk about cooking, and derive a model from the insiders' viewpoints. For instance, the terms used to describe cooking techniques reveal the social implications of cooking, cooks, and specialized roles. Linguist Adrienne Lehrer (1969) used British cooking terms to reveal how semantic domains—collections of culturally meaningful vocabulary—can be identified as part of people's culinary chatter. The general concept of cooking in English includes the following words: boil, simmer, stew, poach, braise, parboil, steam, reduce, sauté, pan-fry, deep-fry, broil, grill, barbecue, charcoal, plank, bake, roast, shirr, scallop, brown,

rissoler, sear, parch, toast, flambé, and burn. Each technique is valued for the specific change it brings to the food. The fact that some of these techniques may be a mystery to you—for instance, shirring or rissoler—illustrates the social usefulness of the model; specialists use more words to describe their techniques. The techniques are then broken down into more and

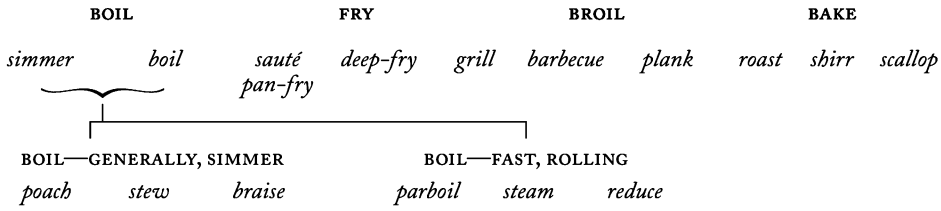


TABLE 4.1 Cooking and Boiling Language

more specialized levels, differentiated by the sources of heat, cooking time, addition of liquids, types of utensils, ingredients, and desired outcomes (see Table 4.1).

Using this sociolinguistic model, it is possible to chart other cultures' cooking vocabulary into an ordered system, which can then bring insight into who cooks, where, what with, and what the outcome—the food—should look like, according to accepted culinary traditions. This allows the model to draw attention to the ability of language to expose the social structure, the different levels of cooking knowledge expressed by members of society based on specialization, age, gender, class, and culture. The public chatter about cooking—at home or professionally—is filled with culinary language that conveys social status. The example of British culinary words reveals the range of possible cooking methods, and how these reflect the social relations of a sedentary, stratified society with a differentiated cuisine. It is part of a contextual study of how members of a culture themselves organize their world, rather than just a concept in the mind of a grand theorist. As the anthropologist Jack Goody argues, cooking, and other cultural patterns—such as kinship, mythology, and art—cannot be reduced to deeper, unconscious human preoccupations about the distinction between people and animals. Instead, while cooking and other cultural practices of everyday life can be studied in detail, they must be contextualized within other cultural systems, such as production, exchange, consumption, kinship, gender, and politics. "Not only are culinary terms themselves more variable than is suggested by the model" (Lévi-Strauss's culinary triangle), Goody points out, "but a richer variety of meaning and operations emerges in the interchange of daily life which a formal analysis confined to the terms themselves cannot fully explore" (Goody 1982, 17–29). The danger of such all-encompassing models, like the culinary triangle, is that triangular oppositions—raw/cooked/rotten—lie in the theorist's mind rather than in a universal principle of human cooking. Instead, cooking techniques must be understood

in relation to the culture of which they are a part—talked about and practised, and implicated in its social, political, and economic organization.

COOKING AND GENDER

Just as cooking techniques are assigned meaning according to their cultural context, so too are the ideological assumptions surrounding women and men, and cooking. Ideologies concern many complex sets of meanings, shared to some degree by members of a society, shaped by power structures, and used to organize social behaviour and practices. In all food-getting strategies, both men and women contribute to the acquisition of the ingredients to make meals, and their activities are accorded different values in different societies. Women, however, most frequently perform the important tasks of preparing and cooking everyday meals (Counihan 1999, 46; Wrangham 2009, 148). Think back to your unfamiliar cooking scenario, and consider the ideological assumptions you work with—the allocation of tasks, or those that you would automatically take responsibility for accomplishing. There is nothing about cooking that would intrinsically make it the exclusive domain of either women or men, and yet a dominant assumption exists that it is "natural" for women to cook as part of their domestic responsibilities toward their families. Similarly, "naturalness" surrounds the role of men cooking in public as specialists. The roots of this assumption have been traced to the division of labour in food getting, beginning with early hunter-gatherers.

Wrangham, in his cookivores hypothesis, has argued that cooking, in general, allowed humans to spend less time and energy than they had earlier devoted to procuring and eating raw food, "freeing" them to pursue other activities. From this perspective, cooking offered convenience to benefit all humans, regardless of gender and age, but it was especially convenient for men, who could take on other socially important tasks (Wrangham 2009, 147–77). He places women as the cooks in early hunter-gatherer society because this activity guaranteed men access to food, gathered and prepared by women, which freed their energies to go hunting for the higher-status foodstuffs, such as meat and honey. Men, he asserts, relied upon women to cook for them, and in return they would share their food and provide protection. This cooperative relationship, Wrangham argues, became formalized as marriage, affirmed and symbolized by the act of cooking and eating together. Unmarried men would have to cook for themselves, compromising hunting time, and lessening their opportunities to host politically motivated, reputation-enhancing distributions of food (Wrangham 2009, 147–77). Married men had time to hunt, and gained social prestige by cooking and sharing highly valued meat, which normalized men's public cooking for feasts. Whether intentional or not, this argument casts daily cooking as a Palaeolithic chore, a lesser activity to hunting, taking time that could be spent doing something else. A whiff of presentism rises from this hypothesis, that is to say, cooking is judged by attitudes

of the present, cast back in time. It attests to the power of the reigning Western ideological constructions surrounding gender roles and cooking: naturally, women cook daily meals. From the ethnographic record, it is possible to find alternative ideologies at work. For example, think back to the Australian Martu, where food is regarded as a fundamental part of people's daily activities, not something relegated to a nuisance that needs to be quickly solved (Bliege Bird and Bird 2008). Alternatively, if we approach cooking from a woman's perspective, it can be found to bring empowerment, social respect, and opportunities for gastro-political control arising from daily provisioning. For example, women can use the withholding of food as an effective social strategy to discipline husbands and other family members and to reward the socially cooperative (Appadurai 1981). Furthermore, the ethnographic record includes many instances where both women and men engage in private and public cooking, cooperatively sharing the tasks, which reflects the social worth of the activity. Similarly, it is inaccurate to always equate men's activities with just hunting, and women with just gathering; this is too simple a dichotomy to apply and does not reflect the ethnographic material. But "Man the Hunter" and "Woman the Gatherer-cum-Cook" has resonated through popular and academic discourse across the centuries of social enquiry, reflecting both the biases of the observers and the power their own ideologies. Consequently, although the contributions of women in hunter-gatherer societies have been recognized as substantial, it has been men's public contributions that have been lauded; those of women have been hidden in the shadowy world of domestic life, devalued despite their essential role (Lee and DeVore 1966, 4). Within these realities, the power of ideological constructions becomes evident, and the "naturalness" of Western gender roles is exposed.

"Naturalness" often resides in the inescapable biological facts of women's child-bearing and breastfeeding; however, men are also involved in child-rearing and are perfectly capable of cooking meals to feed a family. "Naturalness" is assumed to be biologically based, but it is a socially constructed fact. For example, it is questionable whether the "naturalness" of women's domestic cooking is rooted in a biological capacity for cooking. It is important to remember that any division of labour is culturally constructed, and the subsequent value assigned to the tasks reflects the status of those who perform them in society. For instance, among the West African LoDagaa, Gonja, and Bemba, men rarely cook, and women are expected to cook for their husband's guests; their ability to do so reflects well on his agricultural acumen and her skills of household management. Here women's work is given value, and complements men's economic activities (Richards [1939] 1969, 147, 201–2, 214, 382; Goody 1982, 70, 96, 204). Where gender stratification is pronounced, women's domestic cooking receives little acknowledgment, while men's prestigious public cooking garners value, often reinforced through the luxurious and prestigious status of the foods they cook. Yet neither gender is naturally more skilful than the other, nor endowed with a greater range of taste and olfactory faculties; rather, each gender has come to occupy these roles through social processes, culturally wrought across the world. From a broader comparative perspective, the more surpluses that are produced by

a food-getting strategy, the more distant production is from consumption, the more women's cooking becomes invisible, taken for granted, and its significance obscured. This tends to coincide with a greater dichotomy between the privacy of the household or domestic sphere and the primacy of the public sphere as the site of social life. This distinction—between private and public—is also a cultural construction, rooted in the political economy of food production, and later normalized by industrialization and urbanization, becoming a facet of the idea of modernity.

Any claims for an activity's "naturalness" must be addressed with caution, and weighed up in light of the cultural and social context. All cultures make ideologically based claims; however, not many cultural ideologies have a global reach, powerfully influencing societies beyond their shores. Western ideologies have that distinction, widely peddled as a consequence of colonialism, capitalism, and the historical circumstances of globalization. The pervasiveness of this ideology is still felt in Western industrial society—especially in the cult of domesticity, which will be explored later—and it reverberates through the public discourse surrounding cooking, people's relationship with food, and many forms of food advertising. These gender ideologies animate the global mediascape and the food industry's cultivation of a market, targeting female home cooks, and layering gendered meanings onto food, cooking, and eating. This is a powerful force shaping global consumer expectations surrounding gender and class, and providing cues about the competent performance of the associated roles. The making of these now commercialized meanings has had a long history, which can be traced back to the Western Enlightenment, with the rise of science, empiricism, and the ability of humans to increasingly control the natural world (Jordanova 1980). Surrounding these developments, attitudes crystallized around oppositions, such as the fundamental nature/culture distinction, which lent itself to further associations, contrasts, meanings, and value judgments that motivated people's behaviour. Just as agriculture came to control nature, so society became more controlling of people's participation. Gender and class became increasingly distinct, marked by different societal expectations, and women in particular were accorded less value. The range of oppositions certainly reveals many commonly held assumptions, powerful myths that are still part of today's public discourse.

Nature is to Culture
as
Female is to Male
as
Physical is to Mental
as
Mothering is to Thinking
as
Feeling & Superstition is to Abstract Knowledge & Thought

as
Country is to City
as
Darkness is to Light
as
Natural is to Scientific
as
Tradition is to Change
as
Frivolous & Emotional is to Serious & Thoughtful. (Jordanova 1980, 50)

It must be remembered that these are ideological constructs; the lived experience of women and men does not entirely conform to these ideas (Jordanova 1980, 42). Real life is much more complex, much messier, and the boundaries between men's and women's roles are much more blurred. But ideologies are powerful forces, and despite the lack of fit between experience and ideals, the ideas persist.

To illustrate the power of ideology, and its surrounding discourse, to define certain types of cooking as female or male, think about how barbecuing carries notions of gender. Just as Highland Papua New Guinean cultures leave the ceremonial earth-oven cooking to men, so in non-Aboriginal Australia and North America men are stereotyped as the barbecuing gender. In the mid-1950s in North America, the craze for backyard barbecuing has been traced—not to some deep-seated primal urge for men to grill meat on an open fire as their Stone Age ancestors had done, but instead to suburbanites' desire for active outdoor living, converting the backyard patio into an extension of the house, where growing families could find extra space and togetherness. Cooking outdoors was popularly associated with camp cooking, the West, and how men cooked when women were not there, and in the backyard this notion of masculinity continued with bigger forks and tongs for grilling meat. This allowed men to cook at home, in the domestic context, but not in the kitchen—in other words, without compromising their masculinity. Women's role in barbecuing became that of the provider of side dishes, and a range of premade marinades, pickles, mustards, and relishes that the food industry concocted for this new cooking venue. The meat industry happily advertised the joys of backyard barbecuing, furthering gender roles, and the status of meat as the central food item around which all other meal ingredients revolve. These images are part of the public discourse, prevalent in much advertising well into the twenty-first century (Miller 2010; Shapiro 2004, 173).

FIGURE 4.4
Men's Public Cooking: A lineage member making Haida stew for a celebratory feast in Old Massett, Haida Gwaii, British Columbia.

MEN'S CONSPICUOUS COOKING: PUBLIC CUISINE

We can recognize that women are predominantly associated with domestic cooking, but we also know that there is nothing about cooking itself that excludes men from engaging in this activity. Yet in many societies men have chosen the role of public cooking and tend to be absent from ethnographic accounts of domestic cooking. The biases of this record itself have to be acknowledged, tending toward a male perspective for many decades. Cross-culturally, men's cooking does not appear to be limited to societies with pronounced gender stratification, nor to acts of competitive status enhancement, since it occurs in both egalitarian and stratified societies. However, men's public cooking often involves ingredients that are accorded greater value, while the techniques and flavours are usually elaborations of women's domestic cooking. The more prestigious ingredients are often regarded as wealth, or status symbols, and are hunted, grown, or traded as part of men's productive activities. Here we can see the cultural classification of foodstuffs reaching into the gendered rules of cooking. Furthermore, men's (and women's) cooking can be situated in the moral economy of giving; in egalitarian societies, for instance, the cooked prestigious food is shared among close kin and community members as an inclusive act of solidarity, as seen among Aboriginal Australians. Here the public and private are seamless, not distinct. In stratified societies, men's public cooking can restrict the

recipients of higher quality and quantities of food, reinforcing the social differentiation of classes and castes.

Where men's public cooking is part of ongoing social, political, and economic life, it is also an accepted gender role, ideologically based, and part of men's conformity to social norms. They will have learned how to cook by participating with other males as part of ongoing enculturation and socialization. A significant change in men's cooking responsibilities arose within agriculturally based, stratified societies, in which large surpluses could be used to support specialists in the class-based social order. This social organization separated the private, domestic sphere from the public, political, and commercial sphere, including associated gender distinctions of women and men. Cuisine, however, links the two spheres, united but also distinct. Public cooking became a formalized, specialized role in the service of the elite, bringing distinct duties and responsibilities. For instance, it is thought that the earliest public kitchens were part of temples, where cooking for gods and worshippers was a function of a priest-cum-cook who redistributed food through feasting and reinforced the legitimacy of the god (Symons 2004, 241). This role of public cooking is still a part of worship in Hinduism (Fuller 2004). The religions of agricultural societies tend to be highly literate, involving the compilation of sacred texts through which the religions' rules are communicated to their followers, often under the auspices of specialists. As was discussed in chapter 1, many religions include cosmological ideas about the connection between spiritual and physical well-being and food, codified as dietary rules. The public cooks catering to religious and elite gatherings would be expected to provide foods within the parameters of the dietary tradition. The religious texts used by specialist, public cooks can be regarded as the earliest forms of written cooking advice, precursors of recipes, the subject of the next chapter (Goody 1982, 103–6).

The food of male public cooking takes on different meanings within stratified societies, becoming elaborately differentiated, exhibiting high public and low private or domestic styles, with the social differences between people in the same society being reflected in the quality and quantity of food that is consumed (Goody 1982). In feudal Northern European societies, for example, the upper classes were in the position of controlling access to resources, and they could easily employ others to provide for their needs, including cooking the higher-quality dishes. This represents a commodification of cooking, turning a freely given socially oriented act into a commercial enterprise, exacting a calculated price. The cooks, usually men, were employed in private houses or courts, cooking to provision someone else's domestic world. They can be regarded as taking the skills and knowledge of domestic cooking and building upon the established culinary tastes of the culture to further elaborate and refine the cuisine as extraordinary public food (Goody 1982, 101; Pilcher 1998, 146). This demanded large kitchens to produce greater quantities of food using more specialized equipment, and it required greater technical skills from the cooks. Logistically, cooking on a large scale requires coordination, training, and above all an authority structure, which have become the hallmarks of professional cooking.

FIGURE 4.5
Trainee Chefs in Vancouver: The work of young chefs is judged at a cooking competition.

While apprenticeship by experience continues to play an important role in the transmission of professional culinary knowledge, it was the development of writing and the codification of cooking techniques into recipes and cookbooks that really established cooking as a formal, largely male occupation. The literate mode of communicating had an important role in allowing culinary knowledge to be given prestige—and longevity, due to its preservation—while oral culinary traditions can fade into obscurity (Goody 1982). It allowed the cuisine of the great houses to be formulated and formalized through time, culminating in the status of a high cuisine, representative of society. In these kitchens, the cooks had access to new ingredients, flavours, and ideas that introduced new technology and techniques. It also shaped the foundation of national cuisines, drawn from the dishes presented at public dining events.

CHEFS, CELEBRITY, AND THE SHAPING OF NATIONAL CUISINES

Probably the most well documented role of the male cook in refining a distinct national cuisine comes from France, after the French Revolution in the eighteenth century (Goody 1982; Mennell 1996; Trubek 2000; Spang 2000; Ferguson 2004). This cuisine has come to epitomize what is meant by the term "cuisine" itself, and its history highlights the transformation of the cook into a specialist chef, and the rise of restaurants, cookbooks, and the gastronomic

discourse of wider society. French cuisine encompasses the local regional cuisines cooked in people's houses by women ("bourgeois cuisine") and that served in French restaurants and cooked by chefs ("haute cuisine"). It reveals the importance of women's domestic cooking and men's public cooking, tied to the historical process of France's nation-building. The specialized cooks of France, like their British counterparts, worked in aristocratic houses where they produced sumptuous foods for the elite. After the French Revolution, these households were largely dissolved and the cooks sought new work in the growing public kitchens of restaurants (see chapter 7). These kitchens had to be organized to produce dishes quickly and efficiently, with chefs assigned to stations, dedicated to specific tasks, all contributing to the assembly of the dishes. The commercial kitchens became the kingdoms of chefs who invented dishes, refined techniques and equipment, while maintaining a French culinary style, to be able to serve the needs of their paying customers. The successful chefs satisfied their patrons, and served as culinary taste-makers, establishing the reputation of the nation's cuisine. The careers of French chefs are well documented through biographies and an assortment of gastronomic commentators who captured the national importance of cuisine and eating. These include Antonin Carême (1783–1833) and Auguste Escoffier (1846–1935), who influenced not just French cuisine, but also the organization of kitchens, cooking, service, and the tradition of naming dishes to identify a cuisine. Carême, for instance, is credited with inventing the tall chef's hat, which indicated the hierarchy of the kitchen and the authority of the holder. He also refined French cooking techniques into elaborate steps for preparing the finest ingredients, and moved the cuisine beyond the medieval contrasting humoral flavour principles into blends of flavours to augment the ingredients. Sauces were especially important in Carême's culinary repertoire, and he used over 100 variations of three standard or "mother" sauces: *espagnole*, *velouté*, and *béchamel*. These sauces, made in large batches, were used for a variety of dishes, and they represent the beginning of a rationalization of cooking necessitated by restaurant dining (Mennell 1996, 141–45). Carême's work raised the profile of French cuisine, elaborated a recognizable culinary aesthetic, cooking style, and flavour accents, and codified characteristic dishes. He moved men's cooking into an art form, capable of garnering social prestige, and made himself a celebrity taste-maker in his lifetime.

By the 1860s, a new form of service had become the norm—*service à la russe*—which brought separate courses and individualized plates, demanding individualized cooking. Menu selections allowed diners to order whatever they wanted, and chefs had to be able to prepare these dishes quickly. Escoffier furthered the efficiency of commercial kitchens into an assembly line of lesser chefs, each contributing to a single dish or course, and by the late 1890s he had 80 chefs and sous-chefs under his direction at the Savoy Hotel in London (Trager 1997, 360). In the late nineteenth century, restaurant dining and talk of food, the gastronomical public discourse, became important social activities for the middle and upper classes, creating competition among restaurants and chefs. Chefs constantly created new dishes, and some looked to regional,

bourgeois dishes as inspiration, substituting fancier ingredients into their creations and eclipsing the domestic originators (Mennell 1996, 161). It was this competitive, public market that pushed chefs into conspicuous cuisine-shaping cooking. The recipes created by chefs like Carême and Escoffier became part of their written contribution to the French culinary tradition. Both men wrote manuals of cooking techniques, including recipes, each establishing the accepted "traditional" practices of French public and private cooking. The work of these chefs, together with the rise of public dining and the fame of French cuisine at home and abroad, brought new prestige to professional cooking as a career for men, setting the scene for today's celebrity chefs who have become household names. However, not all chefs have been so successful, and cooking was still a job, offering a service, carried out behind swinging doors at the back of the restaurant. For women, then and now, trying to push open these commercial kitchen doors has been a struggle, one fraught with prejudice, often based on an evaluation of their "natural" physical abilities to work within fast-paced industrialized kitchens (Ferguson 2004, 156). This is evidence of the long reach of gender ideologies surrounding cooking.

The commercial kitchen of today's restaurants has further rationalized and industrialized the process of cooking for paying diners. With the increased prestige of chefs as celebrities, the kitchen has moved to the fore in many restaurants, allowing the chefs' work to be observed by the guests. This socialization of men's cooking echoes the changes wrought in domestic kitchens, as discussed below, each influencing the other as sites of cooking and dining. Today's professional cooks and chefs generally receive formal training, often in French culinary techniques, and many will serve long apprenticeships before they can enter the higher echelons of culinary style (Fine 1996). As in the past, the restaurant business is very competitive, with chefs trying to find their own style, or "culinary signature," based upon new dishes, new combinations of flavours, or new plating styles. Each generation reworks the previous culinary tradition, pushes its boundaries, but maintains some culinary continuity to keep the cuisine's identity intact. For instance, the 1960s revolution in French cuisine, nouvelle cuisine, simplified French cooking; shortened menus and cooking times; used fresh, seasonal, and local ingredients; consisted of smaller portions; used more fish and less meat, sugar, and salt; and made sauces through the reduction of juices and stocks. New kitchen technology, such as the food processor, was embraced, and constant invention to avoid boredom became de rigueur. The artistry of Carême's time continued, with food stylishly "plated up" by the chef in the kitchen, reflecting his inspired vision. This changed the style of restaurant dining from silver service, where waiters dished the food onto diners' plates, and allowed the chef's presence and control to be noticed by diners. Nouvelle cuisine was talked about in the media; loved or loathed, it was the vehicle for chefs to become famous; it propelled them into the limelight where they wrote cookbooks and appeared on TV in greater numbers than ever before. These cookbooks were not about reproducing restaurant food at home, but about the cult of personality, allowing chefs to demonstrate their creative skills, often beyond the grasp of most domestic cooks (Humble 2005, 219–25).

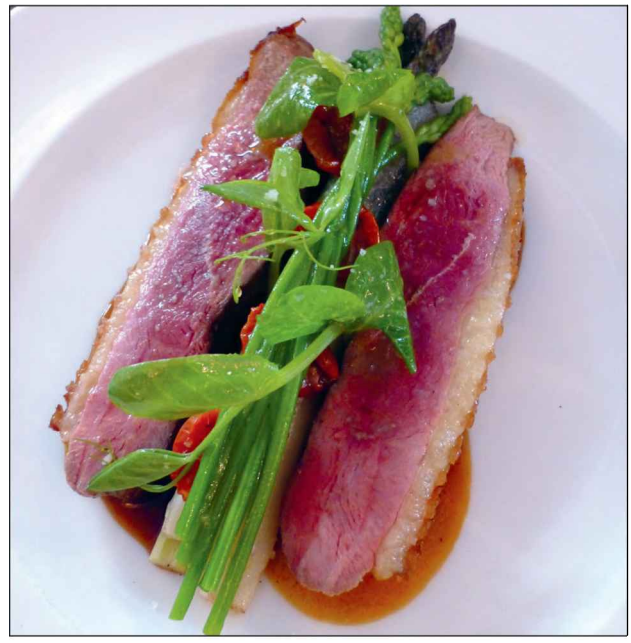


FIGURE 4.6
Stylishly Plated Food: Haute cuisine demands the spectacle of artistic culinary creations delivered to the diner. French nouvelle cuisine at a Parisian restaurant.

The social legacy of celebrity chefs and the associated gastronomic discourse has been the rise of "foodies," people who take to food as a status enhancement and who, like chefs, will "source" the finest ingredients and follow the latest trends in recipes, techniques, flavours, and dishes. Supermarkets have followed the trend, catering to many foodie needs, and bringing their agenda into the domestic kitchen, often upping the level of culinary expectations. Some have argued that today we are "virtually all foodies" and that it's a respectable label, "allowing the eager consumer to see himself as a cultured connoisseur" (Humble 2005, 226; Johnston and Baumann 2010; de Solier 2013). While the term "foodie" is relatively new, the gastronomic identity, and the use of food, cooking, and eating as identity work, are much older, as detailed in chapters 6 and 7.

DOMESTIC KITCHENS: GENDER AND HOME COOKING

The domestic kitchen—whether in North America, Mexico, Melanesia, Australia, or elsewhere—will take many different forms, from simple to complex, but in all places, it will be the site of cooking meals for a social group, defined by the ties of marriage, blood, and

friendship. These are the latter-day hearths of the archaeological record and still serve important physiological, social, emotional, and identity-formation purposes. The social value of cooking to provide safe and nutritious food for a household has been constant, while the ideological assumptions about gender and the nature of family life have varied through times and places (Schwartz Cowan 1983; Silva 2000; Freeman 2004; Gdula 2008). The occupants of these kitchens, still largely women, have been the recipients of changing ingredients, flavours, techniques, and ideas about food from external sources. The place of home cooking and cuisines will be addressed in the next chapter, while Western-style domestic kitchens are the focus of this one.

Western-style domestic kitchens, and the meanings associated with them, have been exported through colonialism, capitalism, and the commercial food system, changing global cooking methods, foods, and ideologies. In these kitchens, public discourses are realized in attitudes and behaviour, and materialized as cooking technology and the food itself, served during meals. The discourses concern the social norms surrounding gender, including the role of cooking, and the contradictions faced by women because of the economic reality of waged work. Women are torn between conforming to older domestic gender norms and working in the public sphere in a professional career. While women have competently juggled both responsibilities, the commercialized food industry, at work since the Industrial Revolution, has increasingly entered the domestic kitchen to decrease the burden of domestic work. The food industry's efforts—industrial cuisine, convenience foods, and efficient supermarket shopping—have all brought advantages, but at some costs. Cooking, ideologically defined as a gendered domestic responsibility, has been recast as a chore and devalued as unenjoyable—in an effort to expand the market for convenience food products. For industrialized, urbanized societies, reliant upon industrial cuisine, a long-term, unforeseen consequence of this commercial intervention has been dietary health, with NCDs becoming a global epidemic (more on this in chapter 8). Furthermore, the rise of celebrity chefs, cookbooks, digital food media, and endorsed food products have increased the popular expectations of the output of domestic kitchens, together with the responsibilities placed on home cooks. To address these complex processes of assigning value and meaning-making, we can briefly explore the interplay of ideological discourses and the realities of cooking in Western domestic kitchens.

Kitchens, similar to hearths, are full of the equipment and evidence of cooking, making these materials useful for interpreting people's activities. The changing range of kitchen equipment represents increasingly efficient cooking and a greater variety of dishes that can be produced, physically influencing cooking methods. This material culture gives a tangible form to culinary traditions, communicates meanings, and guides behaviour: materializing ideologies (see **Box 4.2**, Kitchen Gadgetry). The Western-style kitchen's now familiar form has slowly emerged through the three stages of industrialization, rationalization, and finally socialization, and these showcase how gender ideologies are played out in kitchens.

FIGURE 4.7
Manual Stove: A cook using this Victorian stove needed to learn how to stoke the fire and gauge the oven's temperature.

Industrialization refers to the concentration of mechanized technology that began to move into kitchens during Victorian times, facilitated by the provision of electricity, gas, and running water. Single-family dwellings became the site of independent domestic life, well suited to the urbanized, industrialized, stratified society of capitalism. Here the Western concept of the home as a place offering a secure family life and privacy was established (MacCormack 1982; Löfgren 2003, 142). This has been called "the cult of domesticity," which placed its shrine firmly in the kitchen. Through many forms of public discourse, including religious, gastronomic, and culinary, men's role as workers in the public world and women's roles as housewives in the private home became firmly entrenched. For example, Isabella Beeton, the doyen of British cookery, was instrumental in disseminating the ideology's sentiments. In her 1861 *Book of Household Management*, she lamented, "There is no more fruitful source of family discontent than a housewife's badly-cooked dinners and untidy ways" (Beeton [1861] 1986,

iii). She went on to detail the virtues of "a mistress" who is "thoroughly acquainted with the theory and practice of cookery" and "all the other arts of making and keeping a comfortable home" (iii). Included in these tasks was managing the kitchen stove. The stoves of the time, large and heavy, were hand-stoked and without the means to regulate temperature, which consequently meant that recipes included instructions such as "put it down to a bright fire," "a quick fire," "a clear fire," "a well-heated oven," and "a fiercer oven," all requiring that the user have practical experience of fires in order to interpret the instructions (Beeton [1861] 1986). Beeton herself would have left such laborious tasks to servants. She wrote from a privileged position, directed toward the more affluent middle classes, whose household had become a home: a site of consumption rather than production, staffed by women while men worked outside the home. It reified the private/public dichotomy through an emphasis upon a woman cooking, cleaning, and caring, to keep a good home for her working husband and the couple's children. The notion of the "home" became filled with sentimentality, as a place for men to find refuge after the rigours of their competitive work life. Women's proper duties were within this

FIGURE 4.8
"Nana's Lamb Roast": A New Zealand ready-made meal that recalls the fond memories of home-cooked family meals.

idyllic home life, while in reality many women worked—and even more do so now—but the myth was established, and presented the notion that "real" work happened outside the home. For the industrialized working classes, the household posed extraordinary pressures to meet the demands of work and food provision. Consequently, women who had to work, some as domestic servants, were often presumed to be neglectful of their "natural" duties, and from the 1850s onwards women's duties doubled, because waged work did not lessen their home work. With each successive generation, this cult has been reinforced, slightly reinvented, and the domestic tasks of women redefined through science, **home economics**, state nutritional and hygiene advice, and the food industry, all orchestrated by the media-led public discourse (Shapiro [1986] 2009; 2004).

To return to the domestic kitchen and its equipment, we can hear other powerful voices in the culinary discourse, shaping societal expectations about cooking and gender associations. By the early twentieth century, the self-regulating oven thermostat was invented, and this revolutionized cooking, allowing women to "just put the food in the oven." The marketing voice of the manufacturing industry was directed toward women, presenting early cookers as clean, time saving, easy to use, compact and manageable in size, and guaranteed to produce perfect results. By the 1930s, these had become standard in middle-class houses, and they continue today as a major household appliance. Cookbooks, part of the culinary discourse, began to specify cooking temperatures and included advice about the types of cooking equipment a kitchen required (Silva 2000, 615). About the same time, refrigerators—beginning as iceboxes and later powered by electricity—emerged as novelty items in kitchens; they have now become a necessity to stop food spoilage. Previously, people shopped and ate their food relatively quickly, but as work practices changed, shopping and storage became common, with refrigerators offering the miracle of prolonging freshness. The size of today's refrigerators and freezers is indicative of changing food-shopping practices across the world (Schwartz Cowan 1983; Freidberg 2009).

Associated with the industrialization of the kitchen has been the rationalization of cooking activities. It applied factory-efficiency time and motion studies to domestic kitchens, generating a new form of culinary triangle (see **Diagram 4.2**). This design still features in many of today's kitchens, recommending the most efficient placement of appliances for the cook's movement between the main tasks (Freeman 2004, 41). Kitchens were also designed for storage, especially after the 1950s when appliances became more affordable, allowing consumers to equip their homes with a profusion of smaller gadgets, such as toasters, blenders, and mixers (Freeman 2004; Colquhoun 2008, 324). These offered new opportunities for processing ingredients, including many manufactured convenience foods, putting industrial cuisine on the table as the source of standardized, sanitary, and nutritious meals indicative of modernity (Shapiro 2004, 212).

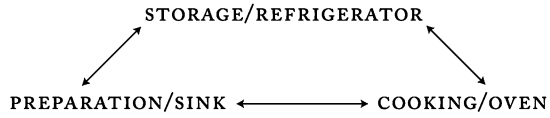


DIAGRAM 4.2 Kitchen Preparation Triangle

The success of kitchen appliances reinforced the food industry's marketing claim that women no longer wanted to cook, suggesting that they were willing to pass on the chore to labour-saving devices. However, whether this claim actually reflected women's sentiments is questionable; many women do find cooking satisfying and use it as part of their identity work, demonstrating competence in a social status. The reality, enjoyed or not, was that many women had little choice other than to cook. Women were, and are, faced with a "dual burden": the weight of ideologically based gender roles and the economic realities of capitalism. This creates the conflicting social roles of wife and mother, with homemaker responsibilities, and that of a professional with a salaried career, earning important household income. Thus, the uptake of appliances and convenience foods can instead be understood as women's strategy to save time, because they had less time due to work responsibilities. This was not a free choice; instead it was constrained by social and economic circumstances, and similar "choices" and circumstances are becoming a global norm (see chapter 8). Instead of abandoning cooking, women "chose" the single option: industrial cuisine, and its "packaged-food cuisine" of the 1950s onwards. This cuisine was a food-industry invention, with cooking methods deliberately developed to address the guilt women felt when not cooking from scratch. This attitude reflects the ideological power of the cult of domesticity; women gained satisfaction from cooking to express caring, a "gift from heart and hands" as part of their socialization (Shapiro 2004, 52). To assuage this guilt, the food industry produced convenience foods that required some preparation by women and some "cooking," using their packaged products. Cake mixes, for example, called for the addition of eggs and liquid, and the decoration of this perfect "home-baked" cake was the ultimate act of caring that appealed to women and their families (Shapiro 2004, 77). This cuisine called upon women's existing cooking skills and creativity, the use of appliances, and it combined processed foods into concoctions of canned soup, Cheez Whiz, noodles, and marshmallows: new dishes for meals. An aesthetic of "glamourizing" dishes with "gourmet" ingredients, including tinned pineapple or alcohol, added to the food's message of social aspiration (Shapiro 2004, 61–64). By the 1960s, another appliance—the microwave—revolutionized cooking times, speeding up the preparation of packaged food cuisine and cementing the place of ready-made meals on the tables of North Americans, and later Europeans. This technology wrested cooking further out of women's hands, making it easy and instantaneous, effectively de-skilling cooking by allowing anyone to follow the

automatic settings and reheat convenience foods. The aesthetic of some of these foods tried to replicate slower, home-cooked versions of dishes, without the necessary time or culinary skills. Cooking was reinvented as effortless for the cook, and technology and ready-prepared foods proclaimed they took the burden away from women (Shapiro 2004). Women's burden, however, lay in the ideological "naturalness" of cooking, which was added to, rather than relieved, by the food industry. For example, Western societies' kitchens are the most technologically laden rooms in the household, with a range of "labour-saving" devices that have come to define "modern" cooking. Yet the growing material culture of the kitchen tells the story of "more work for mother," because these devices increase people's expectations about the quality and quantity of food cooked in the home kitchen and diminish the satisfaction of actually cooking (Schwartz Cowan 1983).

The food industry's packaged food cuisine, a marvel of industrial manufacturing, actively undermined cooking knowledge and skills, and was sold as convenient, suiting the demands of people's busy working and leisured lives. With this marketing, cooking was demoted to a chore, its techniques mastered by machines, reducing women's ability to demonstrate their competence within the dominant gender norms of society. As in the case of any public discourse, there were many competing, dissenting alternative voices raised against the dominant ideological themes. Two influential voices, Julia Child and Betty Friedan, have had a lasting influence on home cooking and women's relationship with this gendered activity, and their work provided new directions for home cooking.

Julia Child was instrumental in rethinking the role of cooking and eating in people's lives, changing the kitchen into a place of socialization (Gdula 2008, 157). Her co-authored *Mastering the Art of French Cooking* (Child, Beck, and Bertholle 1961) and later television show, *The French Chef*, sought to teach home cooks, both women and men, the techniques of French cuisine, which up until that point did not belong in the kitchens of America. (Nor, in the popular imagination, did men. She indelibly influenced home cooking, allowing cooking to return as a consequential pursuit that satisfied the cook as well as those who ate the results ([Ferguson 2004], 159). Child represents just one of the many celebrity chefs who have turned home cooking in a new direction, building upon the likes of Carême and the growing gastronomic discourse. This has brought kitchens, food, and cooks back into the limelight, giving women more confidence in cooking as an important activity. Both reflecting and influencing this changing attitude, kitchen design combined functionality with comfort, with fireplaces referencing the hearth, islands for congregating around, in a multi-purpose cooking-eating-living room. Perhaps this is another idealized construct of public discourse, featuring family and friends socializing, while someone cooks a meal? This was not something new—a reiteration of the cult of domesticity, its kitchen shrine resonating through from Victorian times. However, these trends in kitchen design and in the public discourse around cooking have rehabilitated it, moving it beyond a chore and back into a significant act, capable

of commanding social respect for the home cook. Time can be taken to cook, using learned skills, and probably some convenience foods, and this can be a satisfying, and meaningful activity—nutritionally, socially, and emotionally. As well, other dissenting voices had begun to question the gender of who was cooking in the domestic kitchen, and brought a feminist re-evaluation of cooking.

The voices of feminists like Betty Friedan, whose book *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) appealed to women whose lives did not match the dominant model of life immersed in domesticity, cooking French cuisine for their husbands and children (Shapiro [1986] 2009, 229–30, 237). The feminist movement highlighted the double burden of responsibilities felt by women—to work outside the home and to look after a family—a burden probably most acutely felt at mealtimes. One aspect of feminism's agendas drew attention to the crucial place of women's unpaid, hidden, domestic labour within the capitalist system. Payment would acknowledge that domestic labour was not naturally something women did; it was a construct, reinforced by the gender ideology of capitalism, allowing men to garner higher wages and

FIGURE 4.9
Kitchen Gadgetry: A pressure cooker; more than a simple saucepan, its use requires that technical instructions be followed.

have more leisure time while women had to juggle their working lives with their "domestic responsibilities." Friedan called for women to have more than that model to define their lives—they could manage their domestic responsibilities and have a career, if they wanted to—and she enabled women to imagine themselves and others as being successful (Shapiro [1986] 2009, 246). Betty Friedan sought to reshape the gender roles of women and men, as "domestic life was never going to shift from its ancient moorings in femininity until the workplace became as basic to women's lives as it was to men's. Even then, change would be slow; but of all the gender barriers in the house, the most fragile would prove to be the kitchen door" (Shapiro [1986] 2009, 247). Women could come out of the kitchen and men could enter it, slowly undoing the gender associations of home cooking. Furthermore, in combination with Julia Child's celebration of cooking, the food industry's hold on the ingredients and techniques of cooking was undermined. Cooking was recast as an activity worth taking time for and pleasure in, and worthwhile as a vehicle for the presentation of self to family, friends, and society at large. These are the public culinary and gastronomic discourses that reinstated the role of cooking and food as powerful cultural and social forces in Western societies. This status had struggled since industrialization began, when food became just another commodity, and cooking a necessary chore to ensure adequate nutrition. Food and cooking might seem quotidian, but each plays extraordinary roles in social and cultural life. While they are not everyone's chosen vehicles for self-definition, food and cooking have entered the public imagination on a phenomenal scale. Witness the ascendency of locavorism; the calls to eat fresh, seasonal ingredients and for sustainable agriculture to become the norm; and the work of celebrity-status chefs and food writers who now spread the **epicurean**, gourmet word into the domestic kitchen. The global challenge is to ensure that home cooking is not co-opted by the food industry's industrial cuisine, and that home cooks, whether women or men, maintain their cooking knowledge and skills, to fulfill the promise of cooking to serve nutritional needs, foster social relations, and cater to identity. Toward that goal, the next chapter addresses the transmission of culinary knowledge and the role of recipes and cookbooks in shaping the dishes of cuisines; all of these are centred upon the domestic kitchen, while being publicly wrought but privately practised.

SELECTED READINGS

Short, Frances. 2006. *Kitchen Secrets: The Meaning of Cooking in Everyday Life.* Oxford and New York: Berg.

This book picks apart the discourse surrounding the presumed decline of the family meal, the de-skilling of cooking, and the greater reliance on convenience foods. Short rethinks these assumptions and makes a solid case for the "new rules" of domestic cooking, full of creative "title free" dishes that are skilfully prepared as "proper cooking" for family meals.

Trubek, Amy. 2017. *Making Modern Meals: How Americans Cook Today.* California Studies in Food and Culture, edited by Darra Goldstein. Oakland: University of California Press.

Building upon Short's material, updating the legacy of Julia Child, and addressing Betty Friedan's predictions, this book provides evidence of contemporary cooking and explores the many new ways Americans cook.

FIGURE 5.1
Chicken Tikka Masala: Home-cooked curry dishes are now staples of British cuisine.

CHAPTER FIVE

RECIPES AND DISHES

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- *Explore the origins of recipes.*
- *Examine the distinctions between oral and textual cooking traditions.*
- *Trace the connection between recipes, cuisines, and inalienable wealth.*
- *Describe the role of recipes and cookery books in cuisine and nation-building.*
- *Examine the issue of culinary authenticity.*
- *Note the nature of any cuisine as changeable, but resting upon a sense of culinary continuity.*

INTRODUCTION

There is nothing better, to my taste, than making a curry such as chicken tikka masala to have for a family meal. To make this dish I will follow a recipe, one originally learned from a cookbook but now performed from memory and adapted to fit time constraints, ingredients, and tastes: First, marinate the chicken in yogurt, lemon juice, grated ginger, and garlic, with a little turmeric, for a few hours in the refrigerator. Then grill the chicken on a barbecue in the summer, or sizzled in a frying pan in the winter. The slightly charred chicken is added to a masala, made from sweated onions, chilies, garlic, and ginger, with spices such as garam masala, turmeric, fenugreek, and cumin, all heated in some extra oil to release their flavours. The masala's sauce-like texture comes from a healthy amount of fresh or canned tomatoes and a dollop of yogurt, stirred in quickly to stop it separating. Stirred constantly, the masala's flavours envelop the chicken, slowly heating everything through until it can be served sprinkled with fresh coriander.

I have learned my cooking skills through watching my mum, helping at home, taking classes at school, reading recipe books, watching cooking shows, and practising through the years of student and then family life. This recipe is just one from my repertoire, but this one reminds me of home and has become part of my culinary expression of Britishness, although I have no Indian ancestry. It is a dish that has come to be associated with Britain, a culinary cultural artifact that is reproduced again and again in domestic and commercial kitchens across the country, but it references Indian cuisine and is found in Indian restaurants at home and abroad. It is a recipe and resultant dish that captures the interplay between written recipes, cooking, and the canon of dishes shared by home cooks and public chefs. Chicken tikka masala and British cuisine will flavour this chapter's exploration of the role of recipes—whether remembered or read in the creation of dishes—and how dishes come to be associated with a culture's cuisine. It is about the transmission of culinary knowledge and the codification of cuisines as recipes: serial acts of cooking, applying techniques to combine ingredients and flavours into dishes.

RECIPES: CREATING DISHES

The application of cooking techniques in a methodical, patterned manner to ingredients and flavours involves the use of remembered or read recipes to transform raw materials into a cultural artifact or dish. The word "recipe" is derived from "receipt," a tally of received and accepted information, just as a recipe represents an agreed-upon list of ingredients, methods, and an outcome—a dish. A recipe provides an accepted use of techniques, applied to ingredients, which can be repeated again and again to reproduce a specific dish. They are important knowledge about the qualities of food, cooking, eating, and the social order. To reproduce a recipe, the cook has to be skilled and must have the appropriate ingredients, equipment, and time required to complete the dish. Augmented by creativity, versatility, and adaptability, a cook's skill can be applied to slightly reworking, within accepted parameters, the recipe to circumstance—different equipment and ingredients, for instance, or less time. This ability comes with experience and confidence, making cooking a lifelong experiential learning process.

Recipes have the capacity to change the way we eat, and this is as evident today as in the past. For instance, as agriculture took hold of food production, the variety in people's diets declined and the number of recipes increased, as a cultural practice to creatively combine foods to relieve the possibility of nutrient deficiency. A practical outcome of recipes is the increased nutritional value of the food, gained from combining ingredients to deliver a range of macro- and micronutrients. This satisfied our omnivorous need to eat multiple species, and brought relief from monotonous eating (Katz and Voigt 1986). Indeed, the range of recipes used on a daily basis provides clear insight into dietary habits—what people actually eat—and are useful for considering the balance of nutrients obtained as part of a healthy diet.

Recipes make dishes, and each dish is differentiated by its culinary aesthetics. These culinary aesthetics—the style of the food—emerges from agreed-upon combinations of the ingredients' colours, textures, flavours and shapes, and their amalgamation into a dish's patterns. These are agreed upon through convention, derived from learned cooking techniques, passed on in recipes. For instance, Japanese cuisine is instantly recognizable, largely due to its aesthetic identity. Reproducing this food involves learning the aesthetic pattern and having access to the necessary ingredients (Allison 1991; Cwiertka 2006). Cooking is about much more than just making food; it is about aesthetics, combinations of ingredients, skill, and the interplay of the senses, together with an image—either imagined or illustrated—of what the food should look like when it is finished. From the recipe an "authentic" dish is created. It is deemed authentic in appearance and flavours, measured against previous iterations of the same dish, and conforms to the memories and tastes of its consumers. Whether a member

FIGURE 5.2
Bobo Pulpin Burrata: A Spanish version of an Italian *burrata* and *San Marzano* salad, made by a Michelin-starred chef and served at a Barcelona restaurant.

of a culture assessing our home cuisine or sampling another cuisine, we draw on our knowledge of its aesthetics—what a dish should look and taste like—and use this code to evaluate its authenticity. The dishes may be relatively humble and plain, or they can be luxurious and elaborate, but they will conform to the culture's culinary rules. These rules will vary according to the pattern of meals, which dishes are appropriate for the time of day, and ideas about what constitutes a proper meal. Furthermore, the look of a dish can also be governed by rules concerning the recipients, such as age and gender, with dishes for children differing from those made for adults. In stratified societies, dishes may differentiate between classes—for instance, in Britain, fish and chips served wrapped in newspaper and eaten on the street with the fingers carries working-class connotations, while dainty, crustless cucumber sandwiches on china plates served at high tea are definitely upper class. As this illustrates, the appearance of a dish, including how it is served, will cue the etiquette of eating, allowing dishes to affect people's behaviour. This effectiveness or agency of dishes can easily be felt when one is presented with an unfamiliar dish and feels uncertainty and brief social discomfort from not knowing how to eat it.

Dishes, like any cultural artifact, can come to represent a culture in a tangible form, and they are ethnically marked, displaying their cultural origins. A dish acts as a form of visual communication, relying upon aesthetics and symbols to condense many cultural ideas and messages into one format. The interpretation of those messages, however, depends upon the beholder—as a member of the originating culture or an outsider—mediated by their layers of knowledge attained through experience and education. Some dishes become culture bearers in a more pronounced manner, coming to represent a culture through their presence at home, in private, or on a menu, served in public. These we can think of as the "classic" dishes of a cuisine, the ones that spring to mind when Japanese, Korean, Spanish, Mexican, or Indian is mentioned—such as sushi, hotpot, paella, fajitas, and tandoori chicken. Such dishes are culinary representations of culture, standing in relation to other dishes as representative of a nation, promoting a distinct and recognized identity. While there are some museums that display national dishes, most are found in restaurants and homes. These classics are probably more familiar to a nation's citizens than famous artworks or literature—making them quietly ideal vehicles for establishing a national identity. Furthermore, the smell and taste of a dish are capable of transporting us back in time and place, reconnecting us to our memories of people and shared meals. This level of emotional attachment that can be felt for dishes is evident when there is dispute over their ownership, as, for example, disagreements over who can claim hummus as a national dish. These arguments can be fought at the international level, through agencies like the European Union and UNESCO, where petitioners seek formal recognition of some dishes' patrimony.

A dish's transitory status as a cultural artifact, present and then consumed, does not diminish its importance in conveying cultural associations, because it will be reproduced like any work of art. Recipes become the means of reproduction, imposing order onto techniques,

ingredients, and flavours, and whether performed from memory or read and executed, they have a formula-like quality to guide the creation of the dish. They are the instructions for reproducing a cultural artifact, and they reinforce the dish's presence and identity in the minds of its consumers. Recipes can guide anyone, regardless of their ethnicity, to make the dishes of world cuisines, allowing the borders of culinary traditions to be crossed and experienced anywhere. Again, we can see how recipes change the way we eat. Many recipes are orally based, passed on through experience and conversation from one generation to another, in a specific place; and the textually based ones, written up in cookbooks, are less located, more mobile, and will be passed on to anyone who can read. Both, generally, are still about a performance according to the cook's skill, innovation, and creativity, although recipes can become automated in the mechanical reproduction of dishes by the food industry. In the realm of smaller-scale production of food in kitchens, cooking dishes is about learning by experience, and this transmission of culinary knowledge often comes from personal relationships—but it can also be less social, found in the pages of a cookbook, magazine, or through the rectangular frame of a television, computer, or tablet. Each time the dish is reproduced, it may be a little different, but within the acceptable boundaries of the known culinary tradition. However, the boundaries of tradition differ according to oral and textual transmissions of knowledge, with the oral being more elastic while the textual is more rigid. This distinction becomes most apparent between domestic and commercial recipes.

EXPERIENTIAL COOKING: PERFORMING DOMESTIC RECIPES

Living or oral recipes are remembered and passed down through generations, often between women, but also between men in societies where they publicly cook. These are the recipes that are experienced as part of daily meals, and constitute the (private) domestic cuisine of a specific place. They are learned through an "embodied apprenticeship" that involves watching someone else cook, participating, and slowly acquiring the necessary skills to produce food (Sutton 2001). This type of cooking enacts recipes that are personal and familial, belonging to those who use them, but referencing the culinary knowledge, skills, technology, ingredients, and flavours of the place and the culture. These recipes can be regarded as living in the senses, existing as people's intellectual and practical knowledge, and as part of their lived experience of culture, recorded in memory though successive performances, but able to be creatively adapted to changing circumstances. This is how a culture's cooking techniques become embodied, unconsciously exercised as a technique of the body.

Recipes have a pattern—ingredients, flavours, and methods—and a goal—a particular type of dish (see **Box 5.1**, Pondering Pastry). Within this structure, there is room for variation; recipes are adaptable, accommodating time constraints, the availability of ingredients, and

FIGURE 5.3
Making Pastry: A foodstuff that reveals cooking as an embodied skill.

new ingredients without compromising a dish's culinary identity. Culinary constancy comes from the use of familiar flavours, a cuisine's accent, some staple ingredients, and the overall aesthetic style (Sutton 2001, 125–30). This recalls how a cuisine's cooking style can be compared to a language's grammatical rules, which allow new words to be creolized into still meaningful statements. Recipes contain these culinary rules, and the performative space to bend them without breakage. In the daily performance of living recipes, cooks creatively bend the rules through a variety of techniques (Wilk 2006, 114–21). To illustrate this, we can briefly return to British cuisine, the chapter's unifying flavour.

1. Blending: Mixing ingredients in new combinations or a new order, or mixing techniques and dishes together. For instance, adding barbecued peppers and zucchini to chicken tikka masala to bulk up the vegetables and reduce the meat.
2. Submersion: Hiding the identities of new ingredients by adding them in such a manner that they disappear, as coconut milk and cardamoms do in British rice pudding, or adding condensed soup to thicken the masala sauce.
3. Substitution: Replacing one ingredient with another, especially when one ingredient is not available, such as adding Indonesian *sambal olek* instead of fresh chili or, following ethical decisions, adding tofu instead of chicken to the tikka masala.

4. Wrapping or Stuffing: Enclosing something new or foreign within a familiar wrapping, or vice versa, for example, using leftover chicken tikka masala in a sandwich.
5. Simplification: Paring down recipes, or making the techniques easier and suited to limited time or equipment; for instance, using a barbecue instead of a clay tandoor oven, or a jar of ready-made tikka paste to make a chicken tikka masala.

These techniques are part of the experiential practices of living recipes that allow cooks to respond to changes while still adhering to a cuisine's identity, and to pass recipes on to another generation. Living, performative recipes are freely shared within families, through watching, listening, tasting, and helping as part of the unfolding of domestic life through generations. They are individual cooks' changing repertoires of dishes, and they have an autobiographical quality, recalling past times and anticipating future meals. Cooks may have written down these favourite recipes, copied from cookbooks, acquired from friends, and stashed neatly or stuffed in drawers; these are often a starting point for cooking or serve to jog the memory. The extent of the repertoire will not be revealed at once; the recipes are triggered from memory through changing seasons and social occasions. These are the remembered, spoken, and produced solutions to deciding what to eat: the performance of culinary wisdom played out in everyday life.

Although living recipes and cooking are fundamental to any culture, few anthropologists have recorded their presence. Rare exceptions are Franz Boas's Kwakwaka'wakw recipes published in 1921, and Flora L. Bailey's ethnographic work with the Navajo in New Mexico in 1940. Bailey watched women cook, asked questions throughout, and detailed the performance of their recipes. The extent of the Navajos' knowledge of foodstuffs, their cooking equipment, techniques, taste preferences, food taboos, and eating etiquette were all recorded. Bailey published the observed recipes, translated into a series of steps involving the combination of ingredients while cooking (see **Box 5.2**, Recipe Chaîne Opératoire). She notes that women used "handfuls" and "seemed to know by long practice what proportions should be used" (Bailey 1940, 275); interestingly, through cross-cultural translation, these become more standard measures in the resulting ethnographic article. In this process, the fixing of an oral to a textual recipe becomes apparent. As the recipes are written down, they lose the flexible quality of the spoken or living recipe, and they often take on the recipe format of the observer rather than of the cook. For instance, the substitution of ingredients by the women, such as water if milk is not available, is noted in the article, but it does not become part of the recipes themselves. The written recipe fixes the ingredients and methods into a very specific formula (275). The recipes are given descriptive names from the Navajo, such as Tá na·š gi·ž or Blue Corn Mush: "Add three-fourths cup strained cedar ashes and water to three or four cups water and boil briskly. Add four large handfuls blue corn flour and boil for thirty minutes, stirring with corn-stirring sticks. Remove from fire and stir until very thick. Serve with yucca preserves in winter" (280). This recipe could be made by women or men, but little boys were not allowed

BOX 5.1:
PONDERING PASTRY: TENDER-HANDED FLAKINESS

Pastry is a foodstuff that is an amalgamation of ingredients: flour of some type, a fat or oil, salt, water, and (depending on the type) sugar, and sometimes an egg to add richness. This is an ancient, versatile savoury or sweet creation to encase or hold other foods, preserving juices, and it offers a handy holder to support mouthfuls of food. The distinctions between types of pastry depend on the proportions of flour to fat, and how the fat coats the flour grains to mask or make use of the gluten strands in wheat flour.

To make pastry, following a recipe, brings home the embodied experience of cooking, because its success or failure hinges on the warmth of the cook's hands, the lightness of his or her touch, and careful observation of the textures, weight, and elasticity of the pastry. Recipes call for differing ratios of flour to fat or water, and for mixing through the gentle rubbing of cold fat into dry, room-temperature flour. The cook can feel the soft textures merge together and watch the formation of crumbs before adding cold water or egg to bind the mixture into pastry dough. Gentleness is of the essence; too much kneading awakens the gluten, making for tougher pastry, too little will cause the pastry to break apart. After "resting" in a cool place for a short while, the pastry can be rolled, or formed into the shapes needed, baked "blind" if needed, and then filled to make a dish.

Pastry has an ancient history, reaching back to the Egyptians, but found its greatest expression in the cuisines of Europe, including French, Italian, and British. The use of different types of flours, fats, and liquids influences the type of pastry. Phyllo, for instance, is made from flour and water, which works with the gluten to create thin, elastic sheets. Butter is added between phyllo sheets to make a pie, or dessert such as baklava. Other pastry types, such as puff, involve adding a portion of the butter to the dough and then meticulously rolling, spreading layers of butter, turning, folding, rolling, and repeating six times. The butter stops the gluten from binding and separates the pastry as it cooks into 729 distinct layers. This is the high art of pastry-making.

Pastry is a magical mixture, transformed beyond the substance of its ingredients, capable of being rested, rolled, and shaped, to then, after cooking, display a variety of properties, such as "shortness" and "flakiness," which come to identify specific dishes. Its adaptability makes pastry the ideal vehicle for so many culinary possibilities, making its presence felt across many cuisines. Its making is loved, tolerated, or loathed by home cooks, but it is the basis of many important dishes that define meals—and cuisines.

to eat the mush off the stirring stick, because later in life this would give them shaky hands unsuitable for taking aim in hunting (Bailey 1940, 279). This secondary information concerning cosmologically based food taboos situates the recipe within Navajo ideology, making it about normative behaviour, and producing food.

Boas's early Kwakiutl or Kwakwaka'wakw recipes were collected by George Hunt, but originated from his Kwakiutl wife, Francine (Boas 1921). The 155 Kwakiutl recipes were later analyzed by Helen Codere (1957, 476), who noted that 120 linked specific dishes to social occasions. These recipes provided the rules to cook food and perform the identity work of social standing. The choice of recipes was determined by the guests' social status in relation to the host, in addition to the time of day, and the recipes included instructions for not only the preparation of the ingredients and cooking techniques but also the seating of the guests, the serving of the food, the use of spoons (or not), the offering of drinking water, and debris disposal and spitting (Codere 1957, 476). They were recorded as a narrative of performative events, culminating in the rules for the consumption. One recipe, for fresh halibut heads and backbone, describes the division of labour between a husband and wife: the wife prepared the halibut heads she'd received from her husband, and he invited their "friends" "whom they like to invite" as guests (Boas 1921, 357–59). The guests sat upon a mat, used spoons and bowls, and afterwards sucked the finished bones to extract the fat. Water for drinking and hand washing was offered at the end of the meal. Codere used the recipes to test whether traditional society

FIGURE 5.4
Burrata Remade: *Burrata* salad re-created at home from ingredients sourced from an Italian store, with the substitution for fresh heirloom tomatoes, and experimenting with the remembered taste of the dressing and aesthetics of the dish.

BOX 5.2:
FOODSCAPE GROUNDED: RECIPE CHAÎNE OPÉRATOIRE (OPERATIONAL CHAIN)

A cook's recipe repertoire, those dishes that can be made from memory, has an autobiographical quality. These will have been committed to memory through many past performances as tried-and-tested, never-failing, and guaranteed-to-satisfy favourites. They will have been learned by watching someone else, or in a familial kitchen, or perhaps from a cookbook and executed so many times that the recipe has come to be owned. To recount the recipes will trigger the memories of where and when it was learned, when it has been used—telling the cook's life history through dishes made and shared. These recipes are inalienable, embodied knowledge performed habitually, using all the senses.

Ethnographers have worked to translate embodied, living recipes into textual accounts of cooking and cuisines from across the world. It is challenging to record practical performances that transform raw foodstuffs into culinary artifacts or dishes and convert them into recipes in a standard cookbook format. One method, loosely borrowed from archaeology, is chaîne opératoire, a processing sequence, used to describe the manufacture of stone tools (lithics). In this usage it is the series of actions, and decisions made, as steps in the performance of a recipe. It brings together the ingredients, the cooking techniques that are applied, and the knowledge and skill of the cook. It is about stopping and thinking about the many sensory assessments employed by cooks as they make a dish and move from a mental image to its final realization. It is a recipe—ingredients and methods—but also includes the working, sensory notes of the cook. The process, as ethnographic method, serves to draw out the significance of recipes for telling a life history, and their role as part of an individual's identity work.

- **Choose** *a repertoire recipe—one of your own, but choose a willing friend or family member to work with.*
- **Make** *the recipe together.*
- **Record** *through many media, such as in writing, photographs, film, or sound, the series of steps to make the dish.*
- **Detail** *each step through the techniques applied, the changes wrought on the foodstuff, the agency of the foodstuffs, i.e., their properties that work with or don't conform to*

continues…

box 5.2 continued…

culinary techniques, and the decisions, calculations, and adaptations the cook is making to materialize the mental image of the dish.

- **Reflect** *on the interplay of skills and knowledge, and on the adaptability of the cook.*
- **Assess** *the ability of recipes to communicate personal identity based on gender, age, and ethnicity, and their capacity to tell of all the social occasions of sharing food with family and friends.*
- **Share** *the food you've cooked to together, as part of the living transmission of culinary knowledge.*
- **Write up** *the recipe in a format that includes the insightful skills and knowledge.*

was stratified or a ranked social structure. If it was class based, she argued, recipes would be restricted to each class as a form of differentiation; however, she found no such distinctions. Instead, the recipes cut across society and were used by chiefs and all families but chosen to reflect the guests' status. For example, mashed currants and salal berries were served to chiefs, regardless of the host's social position. Plucked salmon cheeks were served to old chiefs, blistered half-dried halibut to high-ranked individuals, and preserved salmon heads to the lowest ranked (Codere 1957, 480). These recipes are about more than just preparing dishes for a meal; they offer a template for the sociability of cooking and eating, using differently valued ingredients to suit guests' social positions. They are ideals of social standards and procedures, and are intimately tied, as Codere deduces, to the ranked social structure that was played out through redistributions of food. This role of eating is explored in the next chapter.

Similarly, William Bascom's (1951a, 49) work with the Yoruba of southwestern Nigeria included 56 recipes, mostly focused on staple ingredients organized into different methods of preparation, such as porridge made with cassava, yams, maize-starch, and banana (Bascom 1951b, 128–29). Bascom (1951a, 49–51) added that while there were many recipes, most Yoruba women would cook only a few, which made their recipe repertoires less varied but reflective of their husbands' favourite dishes and determined by their personal preferences in seasoning and the stiffness of porridges and loaves (Bascom 1951b, 128–29). Here we can glimpse an example of how individual cooks' repertoires are shaped by the ideological expectations of gender roles and the task of cooking to suit their family's tastes. The repertoire recipes offer autobiographical insights into a cook's social relationships, reference the local culinary tradition, and include refinements according to personal tastes, a situation today's home cooks will understand. These living Yoruba, Navajo, and Kwakiutl recipes are so deeply rooted in everyday life that their value

is often overlooked; however, they do represent cultural property and can be regarded as inalienable wealth, being intrinsic knowledge about how to make the food that identifies the culture.

Inalienable wealth is something that cannot be given up or detached from its bearer, but it can be appropriated—taken and used according to someone else's agenda. The concept has more commonly applied to tangible material culture rather than intangible culinary knowledge, but both "act as vehicles for bringing past time into the present, so that the histories of ancestors … become an intimate part of a person's present identity" (Weiner 1985, 210). Here the inalienable wealth refers to the recipes, and the resultant familiar taste of the dishes, as well as the connection felt between people who share this heritage with one another and gain a sense of personal and cultural identity. As discussed, each cook's recipe may vary slightly from another's, due to personal likes, dislikes, and creative adaptations, yet they will still share culinary links with each other. Each household of cooks and eaters will consume similar, but not identical, dishes and meals, and imagine that everyone in their ethnic group is doing the same within their shared culinary tradition. These recipes are the foundation of the living, domestic cuisine of people's real eating behaviour: home-cooked dishes that are publicly known as "authentic" to the cuisine. The question then becomes this: What happens when recipes are divorced from the people and places of their origins to be made by anyone, anywhere? When the "authentic" travels beyond its cultural origins?

Considering the construction of authenticity, the ethnographic-style work of literary critic Meredith E. Abarca (2004) focuses on the creativity of working-class Mexican women's home cooking. She places "authentic" cuisine within the many domestic kitchens across Mexico, highlighting the cuisine's diversely realized and named dishes, which are nonetheless unified by cooking techniques, staple ingredients, flavours, meals, and eating styles. Beginning in 1996, Abarca conducted more than 20 *charlas culinarias*—culinary chats—with women, discovering how each added a *chiste* or creative twist to the recipes for standard Mexican dishes, such as enchiladas and tamales (Abarca 2004, 4). For example, she describes one woman's personal style of making enchiladas, which was slightly different from other women's but still an enchilada. All women's recipes for enchiladas, however, are variations of enchiladas, and all are authentic since Mexicans make them. This became pertinent when Abarca watched Martha Stewart's authoritative cooking show on making "authentic Mexican tamales," leading her to examine how a non-Mexican outsider could claim to make "authentic" Mexican food by following a specific recipe. This cooking show's "authentic" recipe had been simplified for ease of cooking, but it carried its Mexican cook's *chiste*, making it just one of many versions of tamales cooked throughout Mexico. However, the recipe had moved from a kitchen into the limelight of celebrity, and become a written recipe, a fixed version of how the dish must be made to be authentic; to deviate would be to dilute the dish's authenticity. A single recipe, culled from many versions, is presented as the standard for evaluating "authentic" tamales. This self-conscious presentation of authenticity—based upon following a written recipe—exposes

the gap between cuisine as a part of home cooking, and cuisine becoming fixed in recipes to be followed by anyone with the technical skills, equipment, and ingredients. The written recipe moved the ownership to the cookbook author, and privileged the one textual recipe over the many living recipes of everyday domestic cooking (c.f. Abarca 2004, 4). The act appropriated the women's personal, inalienable culinary knowledge, turned it into an anonymous commodity, and committed it to paper to be bought by others. It also took the recipe into the world of public discourse, essentializing this tamale as emblematic of Mexican cuisine, cemented in the pages of cookbooks. This gradually exaggerates a cuisine's identity as comprised of a set range of dishes held within rigid boundaries; any deviations occupy a marginal status of questionable "authenticity." The process alters the dish's contextual meaning rather than communicating the original cook's cultural identity; made and eaten by Mexicans, the dish can be made by anyone of any ethnicity, thereby communicating their social identity, their willingness to cook

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FIGURE 5.5
Cooking from an Online Recipe: From oral to textual to digital, the transmission of culinary knowledge and skills has changed through time.

dishes sourced from other cultures, their distinctive taste, and the search for "the authentic." The movement of a tamale recipe from a domestic kitchen in Mexico onto the pages of a celebrity cookbook and into any kitchen anywhere makes apparent the slippage surrounding "authenticity." It is authentic for the originating cook, but not consciously, and the recipe will be adjusted to the needs of a cook in Chicago, becoming authentic to their culinary style and repertoire. The recipe's dish—tamales—may become so wildly popular in the United States that it is embraced as an authentic national dish, with its Mexican origins forgotten. In these examples, authenticity is an evaluation of the recipe's adherence to someone's standards of what constitutes cuisine, their own and that of others; it is about the power to define, and for some, to disseminate that judgment, and codify a cuisine in the public sphere.

TEXTUAL COOKING: READING COMMERCIAL RECIPES

Compilations of recipes—early cookbooks—go far back into antiquity, and while they have significantly changed in format, from cuneiform clay tablets through handwritten manuscripts to mass-produced books, they can all be understood as a new means of transmitting culinary knowledge. This has moved cooking beyond purely experiential, informal learning to become textual, formal, and standardized knowledge to train literate, public cooks. Subsequently, these recipes established a unified style of cooking and resultant dishes that became the basis of a high cuisine, consumed by the wealthy. As printing capabilities increased and literacy spread, cookbooks disseminated the knowledge of a cuisine farther afield, liberating it from the professional kitchen and bringing it back into the domestic kitchen, into the hands of women, and onto their tables as family meals. The changing media of transmission of culinary knowledge, from voice to print, printed page to memory, are explored in this section. This involves the translation of embodied, experiential cooking recipes into textual recipes compiled into a book, and potentially back into cooks' memories.

The way recipes are presented in cookbooks has changed through time, moving from narrative-like renditions of the ingredients as they are combined and cooked to a more scientific style, with measured ingredients, methods, cooking temperatures, servings, and latterly nutritional and caloric information. Indeed, many of today's recipes demand that cooks be highly literate and numerate. Literacy was, and is, indicative of social differentiation, and brought access to power—to control knowledge, and command authority over its content. The earliest-known cookbooks are associated with the stratified societies of the ancient world: the Greeks, Romans, Persians, Chinese, Indians, and Arabians, beginning in Mesopotamia nearly 4,000 years ago. These cookbooks record the activities of specialists who cooked for the elite of society, and include references to the connections between food, diet, and health, underpinned by religious and, later, scientific cosmologies. This was specialized health-care

knowledge, available only to those who could read, and contained the ideological meanings surrounding ingredients, cooking, and social life. Cookbooks offer more than just ideas about what and how to cook; they commit to paper the social and cultural ideas of everyday life played out through food (Goody 1982, 103–6; Flandrin 2000, 365). The male cooks took what were oral traditions and made them textual, and they took the knowledge away from the daily, domestic lives of women who cooked for their families, transforming cooking into the specialized knowledge of men who would cook for wealthy employers as a job. These two realms of cooking—at home and in public, for free and for wages, by women and by men—came to be identified as the location of lower cooking versus higher cooking, or low and high cuisine. The stratification of society, and all its ideological assumptions, is cast onto this differentiated cuisine.

The early cookbooks were professionally written, allowing them to become training manuals capable of standardizing the culinary knowledge of the time (Mennell 1996, 67). The style of written recipes has changed through time, but they all have a prescriptive character, a statement of the ingredients and procedures necessary to make a particular dish. Conformity to a recipe's formal instructions suggests an accurate reproduction of the dish, in any kitchen, thereby helping to establish a standardized cuisine. This fixed format of recipes did foster conservatism—delineating the ingredients, techniques, and dishes of the culinary tradition. But given the adaptive, creative potential of cooking and cooks, further improvements, refinements, and popularization of dishes by innovative chefs occurred. The written recipes defined the culinary tradition and created a niche for individual chefs to make their personal creative contributions to the vitality of the cuisine by adding new dishes, but ones that were recognizable within the culinary tradition. Cookbooks marked the boundaries of cuisines, and marked chefs as capable of pushing the boundaries, conducive to food's gastro-political capacity (see next chapter). This was the high cuisine served to the upper class, initially in their private homes, and later in the restaurants of Europe. Thus, cookbooks systematized cooking, widely communicated a standardized knowledge of core practices, and often included exotic ingredients, as befitting the conspicuous consumption of the high cuisine of the upper classes (Goody 1982, 105, 130). But the reach of cookbooks gradually extended across classes, shaping both poles of stratified societies' cuisines. Cookbooks entered domestic kitchens to fill the void left by the demands of wage labour, which had eroded women's informal, experiential transmission of cooking techniques and recipes. The double burden of women's home and work responsibilities, left many women bereft of the opportunity of learning how to cook by helping their mothers, and later in life they looked to other sources of cooking advice. Cookbooks offered a solution, as long as women could read, and gradually were cheap enough for all classes to buy. These texts brought a quiet, disembodied transfer of culinary knowledge in the absence of a family member or friend in the kitchen. This returned to the domestic kitchen some of women's living recipes and dishes that had fuelled

men's commercial cooking in the service of the upper classes (Goody 1982, 152). While many women are able to learn cooking techniques and recipes from their mothers (and fathers), there is now a significant place in many domestic kitchens for cookbooks of many cuisines, using every type of ingredient, creating every type of meal, and dealing with every type of health issue. Whether one of these could be defined as your own cuisine takes us into the realm of cookbooks and nationalism.

COOKBOOKS: CODIFYING NATIONAL CUISINES

The study of cookbooks has proven to be very fruitful to our understanding of people's changing relationships with food, their use as a means for learning how and what to cook, and the shaping of national cuisines (Goody 1982; Mennell 1996; Zlotnick 1996; Appadurai 1988; Cusack 2000; Humble 2005; Symons 2009; Gvion 2009; Driver 2009; Floyd and Foster 2010). Despite the unclear correlation between cookbooks, recipes, and what people actually ate, these books are still an incredibly valuable resource for food historians, who can examine how ingredients were used, how techniques have changed, and what spices and flavours were associated with different times and places (Laurioux 2000, 297–301). In the particular political context of nation-building, written recipes can be used to unite people with the cuisine of their culture and instil a sense of connection between people and a particular place (Wilk 2002). Cookbooks can provide insight into how nationalist agendas become part of the everyday experience of living for members of the nation. Public cuisines are part of a nation-state's creation of a national culture that unifies the geographical regions and diverse ethnic groups within its territorial borders, and allows the state's citizens to imagine they share a common culture, since they all belong to the same political entity (Anderson [1983] 2006). These cookbooks may not have a title that draws attention to the national affiliation, but they are often present as the book of first resort in a nation's kitchens. For example, starting in the 1890s, Italy attempted to unify a land intensely divided by the politics of class and regionalism, and a national cuisine had to be capable of bridging these differences. Pellegrino Artusi's 1891 *La scienza in cucina e l'arte di mangier bene* (The science of cooking and the art of eating well) became a national favourite with its friendly and informative style, and an inclusive range of recipes from Italy's regions. Artusi's writings reveal his awareness of how Italian class differences were articulated through food, such as in the strong flavours of garlic and hot peppers, which could be tastefully toned down for the middle classes. This made the regional recipes suitable for all Italians, regardless of class (Helstosky 2003, 121, 123–24). This cookery book has become the foundation for traditional Italian cuisine, and it has re-entered the contemporary public food discourse in Italy with the Slow Food Movement, which has championed

Artusi and republished his autobiography (Helstosky 2003, 134). The rise of the Slow Food Movement is explored in chapter 8.

As noted in chapter 3, the construction of a unified national culture involves the invention of traditions that suggest continuity with the past, and so reconcile any contradictions and uncertainties existing in the present, thereby formulating a shared future (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1984; O'Connor 2009). National cuisines draw upon "traditional" ingredients (some of which will be introduced species), flavours, and regional dishes, amalgamating them as contemporary shared foods that reflect the nation's diverse population. It is through food rather than political rhetoric that most people experience the nation in everyday life—so those foods that are made emblematic become powerful symbols of identity, connected to specific events in a nation's history, and when consumed literally connect people to the values, beliefs, and achievements of an idealized past (O'Connor 2009, 129). For instance, just one royal recipe for a highly symbolic and emotive dish—the Christmas pudding—had the power to unite the British nation and the Empire during the economic uncertainties of

Igiene - Economia - Buon gusto
La Scienza in cucina e l'Arte di mangiar bene
Manuale pratico per le famiglie
compilato da Pellegrino Artusi
CASA EDITRICE MARZOCCO
FIRENZE

FIGURE 5.6
Artusi's Cookbook: An Italian-Canadian woman with her copy of the classic Italian national cookbook.

the 1920s and 1930s. The British monarch's butler widely shared the recipe, made from imperial ingredients—Australian sultanas, Jamaican sugar, Canadian apples—and contributed to the public imagining their connectedness through cooking and eating the king's Christmas pudding. This national dish brought a sense of continuity with a nation's past, part of a strong, coherent, fixed, and identifiable cuisine, and extended the cuisine's reach into distant lands: a patriotic dish to be eaten at Christmas, even in the sweltering heat of Australia. As this example illustrates, these public cuisines are not "neutral, innocent concoctions," but instead are shaped by a society's dominant ideology—be it capitalism, nationalism, or imperialism, for instance—and their related power structures (Cusack 2000, 207). Because they are about cooking and food, their power is often overlooked, yet they are politically charged cultural artifacts, a clear example of banal nationalism (Billig 2002). This is typical of invented traditions, and the selective memory of nationalism, which easily domesticates introduced ingredients and recipes and forgets their origins. National cookbooks may not proclaim their national allegiance, but they are consulted without a moment's hesitation.

While there are many voices at work in the national public discourses that shape a cuisine, cookbooks have become an important means to place its dishes on the tables of domestic and commercial eating venues. These circumstances can be charted in many developing nations, coinciding with urbanization, the rise of restaurants where dishes become publicly known, and the retailing of recipes' ingredients, flavours, and equipment. Arjun Appadurai (1988), for example, examined the rise of English-language Indian cookbooks in India as part of the process of creating its national cuisine after independence from Britain. He considered the relationship between the rise of a mobile, educated, and employed middle class in India and the proliferation of cookbooks that brought together regional and ethnic cuisines to create an Indian national cuisine. The cookbooks and their recipes crossed social boundaries before the people themselves did, allowing castes to privately taste each other's foods without publicly breaking the caste system's ideas of purity and pollution (Appadurai 1988, 7). Appadurai points out that what was being consumed through the dishes were culinary classics of India's distinct regions, ethnic groups, and castes, allowing people to acknowledge their diversity while domesticating their differences. Eating these dishes became a benign means to embrace diversity, to get to know "the Other" without actually meeting. The cookbooks Appadurai examined all established a national cuisine, composed of dishes from across the territory but unified through shared cooking techniques and access to flavours and ingredients; and they provided menus, models of meals, that cemented the image of all Indians eating together. Included in the pages of these cookbooks are the dishes that have become emblematic of Indian cuisine, within and without its borders, carried into the diaspora by Indian migrants and communicated to others in further cookbooks and on restaurant menus (Narayan 1995; Zlotnick 1996; Collingham 2006; Panayi 2008; Highmore 2009). This codifies a nation's cuisine,

commiting it to representative dishes and rules of consumption. These become condensed into the "classic" dishes of Indian cuisine, including *rogan josh*, *vindaloo*, *bhajis*, *dhansaks*, *biryanis*, and *kormas*, which are found on the menus of Indian restaurants around the world—including in Britain, the home of chicken tikka masala.

BRITISH CUISINE: FROM COOKBOOKS TO CURRY

Chicken tikka masala, according to the dish's mythology, was first created in Glasgow, Scotland, after a grumpy customer complained his chicken tikka was too dry. The inventive chef blended, submerged and substituted ingredients to satisfy the customer. He opened a can of Campbell's condensed tomato soup, added some curry powder, simmered it, added cream, and smothered the chicken with its "masala" sauce (Collingham 2006, 2). From this creative but inauspicious start, the dish has become as familiar as British fish and chips, and indeed, there are now more "Indian" restaurants across Britain than there are "chippies," but this is not surprising, given the country's colonial relationship with India (Highmore 2009). With this presence of curry—at home, and in the Indian restaurants of Britain—chicken tikka masala has come to hold a place in the hearts and stomachs of many British people. In 2001, Foreign Minister Robin Cook declared the dish part of the nation's culinary heritage, and in a speech he celebrated "Britishness" in the face of instability brought by globalization, immigration, EU membership, and the internal devolution of power to Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. He wanted to establish a shared national culture by rejecting mere tolerance within a multi-ethnic society, and instead celebrated diversity, which is "enriching our culture and cuisine" (Cook 2001). This was so successful that seven years later a motion was put forward in parliament to formally recognize chicken tikka masala as a "culinary masterpiece" invented by Ali Ahmed Aslam, and for the dish to be given EU Protected Designation of Origin status (Parliament, UK 2009). "Curry" has been promoted to a classic dish of British cuisine, and cookbooks have brought it into domestic culinary traditions since the mid-1700s, allowing non-Indians to claim an Indian dish as part of their culinary patrimony.

Cookbooks have proved to be valuable cultural documents, revealing the techniques, ingredients, flavours, and dishes that constitute a cuisine. Comparisons of cookbooks through time expose the changing nature of a cuisine, including the domestication and appropriation of new ingredients and dishes acquired from other cuisines. These changes tell of wider historical, political, economic, and social processes that come to be reflected in the foods of a place. Furthermore, cookbooks reveal the social order of the society. The origins of British cuisine can be charted back through time and rest upon the history of old and new immigrants, religion, class, regionalism, the agricultural way of life, the rise of urban centres, industrialization, capitalism, and the expansion of Britain into new lands as sources of ingredients, raw

FIGURE 5.7
Kanpur Garden Chicken Tikka Masala: No time to cook curry? Instead, buy it from the supermarket.

materials, workers, markets, and colonies for settlers. Like other cuisines, it has borrowed ingredients, flavours, techniques, and dishes from other people's cuisines, and given them a distinct British twist and style of eating. This cuisine has changed through time as new influences are incorporated and their recent inclusion is quickly forgotten. Exactly how and why some influences were accommodated and others ignored is a complex process that cannot be reduced to single causes, and instead is the interplay of circumstances, choices, and constraints (Mintz 1985). British cuisine has been a differentiated cuisine for many centuries, reflecting the existence of a ranked and later stratified society whose ruling social groups had access to a greater range of locally produced or traded resources. The "high" or public cuisine of the ruling groups can be broadly differentiated from the "low" or private cuisine in terms of the sites of cooking, and the gender of the cooks. In these two contexts, the style of cooking, the recipes, ingredients and flavours, and the resultant dishes shaped the two ends of the British culinary continuum, at once distinct and yet joined through the centuries (c.f. Wilk 2002; 2006).

Cookbooks in Britain became particularly important in domestic kitchens during the Industrial Revolution. The changing circumstances of urban living and waged labour shifted family life into independent single-family households, which eroded the opportunities for women to learn to cook by watching their mothers. To fill this vacuum in the transmission

of culinary knowledge, women turned to buying **street foods** and industrial cuisine—foods they did not really have to prepare. Cookbooks offered an alternative and became instrumental in imparting cooking skills; and eventually governments provided school classes to teach girls (and later boys) how to cook. Cookbooks were more cheaply produced from the mid-1700s on, allowing the culinary knowledge of the high cuisine of British cooking, executed in the great houses, to be brought into the domestic kitchens of the nation. To begin with, they were bought by wealthier people and served as guides to running a household; such cookbooks included Hannah Glasse's 1747 *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy*, Eliza Acton's *Modern Cookery for Private Families* in 1845, and Isabella Beeton's *Book of Household Management* in 1861, which included contributions from the readers of *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* (Beetham 2010). The nationalist agenda of these cookbooks is not betrayed by their titles. The women cookbook writers have been described as "simplifiers and transformers" of the recipes of the male courtly cooking tradition, and they laid the foundation for today's national cuisine (Mennell 1996, 202; Humble 2005). Many of their cooking techniques and dishes are still familiar to British home cooks, and the inclusion of "foreign" dishes, domesticated and reworked to British tastes, is a typical feature (Bullock 2012). For instance, Glasse's 1747 recipe for "Curry the Indian Way" began the nation's infatuation with Indian cuisine, but adapted to British tastes and ingredients. The recipe references a French dish, *fricassee*, to establish the culinary aesthetics—to look like familiar food—and simplifies and substitutes the ingredients and methods, including long stewing, the adding of cream, and the inclusion of small amounts of turmeric, pepper and ginger for the "curry" flavour (Glasse [1747] 2011, 30). By 1847, Eliza Acton advises her readers to avoid too much turmeric, because the colour of curry should be "dark green," and some curry powders need "prodigal" use, because they will be "too acid for English taste" (Acton [1845] 2011, 48). These recipes "tone down" the dish to suit British culinary aesthetics and tastes of the times: not colourful, well cooked, and bordering on the bland.

British cookbooks placed women's roles firmly in the marital household, in keeping with the cult of domesticity, and the nation's cuisine came to be identified by the dishes of domestic home cooking (Mennell 1996; Beetham 2010). However, this was not the food the British upper classes identified with, and they endeavoured to assert their distinctiveness over the rest of society by favouring French haute cuisine. Two professional male chefs, Alexis Soyer (1810–58) and Charles Elmé Francatelli (1805–76), brought French cuisine to British high society through restaurants and their cookery books. In their eyes and those of other gastronomic commentators, the English cuisine of the domestic kitchen was mediocre, and their opinion created a lasting impression of its inferiority, especially in comparison to French cuisine. Consequently, British food has had a rather sad reputation for many years; as George Orwell said, "Every style of cookery has its peculiar faults, and the two great shortcomings of British cookery are a failure to treat vegetables with due seriousness, and an excessive use of

sugar" (Orwell 1946, 15; Mennell 1996, 249; Panayi 2008, 12; Warde 2009a, 238; 2009b, 157). The cuisine's lack of prestige did little to encourage professional chefs to experiment and refine its identity, as happened with French and Italian cuisines. Britain's cuisine would have to wait until the late twentieth century for local, seasonal, and regional food to be featured in celebrity chefs' menus (Mennell 1996, 204–14; Humble 2005; Oliver 2011).

British cookery books chart the rise, fall, and re-emergence of a national cuisine, and they have played a role in defining the tasks of the housewife, reshaping the transmission of culinary knowledge, and bringing cooking into the domain of a leisure activity pursued by the dinner-partying middle class (Humble 2005). The role of celebrity chefs as taste-makers has been important in this process; one example is Delia Smith, whose *Complete Cookery Course* (1982) includes many of the same recipes found in Glasse, Acton, and Beeton, including creamy chicken curry, to be made from leftovers (Smith 1982, 694–95). Her books have provided some indication that home cooks do use recipes, with the term "the Delia effect" used to describe the spike in sales of specific ingredients, such as a 200-per-cent rise in cranberry sales after one broadcast (Humble 2005, 236). Continuing this trend, in 2009 Britons bought more than seven million cookery books, and the next year Jamie Oliver's *30-Minute Meals* became the fastest-selling non-fiction book in British publishing history ("Season's Eatings" 2010). The Food Channel in North America, and mainstream channels in Britain, have shifted food and cooking into a new prominence in people's minds. The sales of cookbooks, the plethora of television cooking shows, and the presence of recipes and food blogs on the Internet all point to the loudness of the culinary and gastronomic public discourse surrounding food, which easily infiltrates our beliefs and drives our actions. Here is the interplay between living, domestic cuisine and exaggerated public cuisine that operates to some degree in every culture (Wilk 2002, 70).

Into the twenty-first-century, "Modern British Cooking" has emerged as an amalgamation of Anglo-French techniques with the influence of ethnic immigrants, and a nod to the once-reviled, overcooked, stodgy British cuisine. As part of this reinvented traditional cuisine, two stalwarts of the British culinary scene—Heston Blumenthal and Jamie Oliver—have attempted to rehabilitate the reputation of British cuisine, and both include roasts, pies, "bangers and mash," fish and chips, and sweet desserts in their cookery books. They also include curry, especially chicken tikka masala, as "the essence of our culinary heritage," while also recognizing it as "a bastardised British dish" (Blumenthal 2006; 2007; Oliver 2009, 82). These two celebrity chef authors represent two trends in contemporary cookery books in Britain: the impressive cookery of chefs like Blumenthal, for weekend dinner parties; and the back-to-basics style, such as Oliver's, teaching techniques to those who feel they need to simply learn the skills of cooking, and especially pitching cooking as something that men can do (Humble 2005, 167–68). For example, Oliver includes in an "Easy Curries" chapter a recipe for chicken tikka masala that is toned up to new British tastes, full of fresh chilies,

ginger, and cilantro. It does look back to Acton's and Beeton's Victorian-era recipes by including a ready-made curry paste, but this one is made by a British South Asian company. The recipe represents a new British culinary aesthetic—colourful, spicy, healthy—and ethical, calling for organic and free-range ingredients, with continuities through cookbooks of the past (Oliver 2009, 82). Both Oliver and Blumenthal present an amalgamation of recipes indicative of Britain's history of imperialism, urbanization, industrialization, globalization, the availability of new ingredients, and the influence of new immigrants (Oliver 2011). British cuisine has transformed, and the players in this process are chefs, cookery books, *and* home cooks, all acting to reshape what constitutes British food in the public's mind.

The cookbooks of Jamie Oliver, Delia Smith, and Heston Blumenthal, along with cookbooks about an extraordinary range of other nations' cuisines, are all available for purchase pretty much anywhere in the world. Combined with the global availability of ingredients and flavours discussed in chapter 3, it is now possible for anyone, anywhere, to cook any nation's cuisine, and to think of these dishes as part of their own culinary repertoire. Home cooking becomes the site for including a range of dishes, communicating a cosmopolitan outlook through a domestication of global dishes, ingredients, and flavours that become as familiar as any of those long associated with a specific location. This does not compromise the existence of distinct cuisines; rather, it is indicative of the long-term processes of culinary change that have always seen new ingredients and flavours being incorporated into people's cooking and eating practices. The new dishes come to be given local meanings and values, and often their foreign origins are forgotten and they take on an adopted culinary identity. All nations' cuisines span the range between the expediency of home-cooked dishes and the more exaggerated dishes of public culinary knowledge: the classic dishes. While the classic dishes appear more fixed in the pages of cookbooks and menus, they too will change, but they will come to be imagined by the public as constant, authentic, and traditional. For instance, Indian cuisine will be imagined as a series of classic dishes, but new dishes appear, at home and in restaurant kitchens, making it like any other cuisine—dynamic and responsive to new ingredients and circumstances. Interestingly, the hybrid British-Indian dish—chicken tikka masala—has now made its way "home" to India, where it can be found in cookbooks and on restaurant menus (Highmore 2009, 187).

It is important to return our discussion to the domestic kitchen, where many cookbooks are used to get inspiration for meals. We can understand household cookbooks as manuals, instruction books about how to learn the techniques, buy the right equipment, find the right ingredients, make the recipes, serve the dishes, and eat the meal. Many are also sensory literature, a sort of guidebook of culinary information acquainting the reader with the sights and sites, such as dishes of social distinction with class affiliations, or dishes of cultural distinction with ethnic affiliations, or dishes of temporal and spatial distinction with nostalgic associations for bygone times and places. The pages of cookbooks that are worn, or splattered

FIGURE 5.8
Nouvelle Rarotongan Cuisine: Rarotongan restaurant nouvelle cuisine, using traditional ingredients for a taro puree, topped with a papaya, coconut, and tuna fishcake. A new national haute cuisine aesthetic, served for tourists.

with the evidence of past cooking, serve as guides to past meals, provoking memories of people and social relations. Furthermore, cookbooks are primers for accumulating cultural and **social capital**, imparting the necessary knowledge to reproduce and emulate social, cultural, temporal, and spatial culinary distinctions. They are capable of blurring the culinary boundaries of the social order to impart a simultaneous sense of belonging and difference. There are probably no other cross-cultural traditions that can be reproduced in people's homes on such a scale as learning how to cook another ethnic group's cuisine. Cookbooks are like few other books that can be found in a household; they are sensory, evocative, consulted, and have agency in shaping social and cultural life. They are a starting point for home cooking, and their recipes can gradually be committed to memory, performed, and reinvented as the cook's autobiographical repertoire. These home-cooked dishes are served in the next chapter's topic of commensality and gastro-politics.

SELECTED READINGS

The chapter explores the dynamics of the transmission of culinary knowledge and skills; the embodied practices of cooking at home and in public; and the shaping of dishes as part of national cuisines. These two suggested readings dish up more details about the act of cooking, the performance and creation of recipes, and the nature of cuisine.

Wilk, Richard R. 2006. *Home Cooking in the Global Village: Caribbean Food from Buccaneers to Ecotourists*. Oxford and New York: Berg. https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350047686.

This book stands as a classic ethnographic account of cooking and cuisine-shaping in a single context—Belize, against the historical backdrop of the country's independence and shaping of a national cuisine.

Adapon, Joy. 2008. *Culinary Art and Anthropology*. Oxford and New York: Berg.

A very original book that tackles cooking as an embodied skill and a creative process, focusing on Adapon's experiences and observations while learning to cook Mexican cuisine. It interweaves anthropological theories with an evocative account of Mexican home cooking.

FIGURE 6.1

A Meal Is Served: The table is set for a family feast, with the hostess making final touches to the spread.

CHAPTER SIX

EATING IN

Commensality and Gastro-Politics

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- *Describe the significance of commensality for social relations and identity work.*
- *Describe the shared patterns of meals.*
- *Examine the connections between meals and cuisines.*
- *Situate meals within differing types of exchange.*
- *Identify and explain the different types of feasts employed by societies.*
- *Identify the dynamics of gastro-politics played out through everyday meals and feasts.*

INTRODUCTION

"Come and sit down," my aunty said, as she rushed around the dining room, busily adding the finishing touches to the table and to the meal she had prepared. The table was set with a cloth, plates, cutlery, glasses, indicative of a proper meal to be enjoyed in the company of others. The decision about what to serve had been driven by airline schedules, airport journeys, and wanting to have something that was "ready to go" at a moment's notice. Consequently, the meal was an array of sliced meats, little pies, salads, and some wine to drink in celebration of the occasion: a visit from relatives who live half a world away. This was typical Northern British cuisine: small pies from a local manufacturer, sliced meats from the local market, and a range of salads, dressings, condiments, crisps, and crackers from the supermarket. A dessert waited in the kitchen, to be served after the first course was finished. As the visiting niece, I was pleased to help in any way and was grateful for my aunt's efforts, which went beyond the ordinary in recognition of this being a special meal, a feast.

This intimate domestic meal scene is reproduced across the world, in different styles of homes, with different foods and utensils, but everywhere shared by people who are close to one another: kin, in-laws, or friends. These are patterned events where the sharing of food—commensality—brings people together, creating social groups, and forming loyalties and obligations that are so intimately tied to our being that we often overlook the power of food to maintain and create those relationships. Eating together is the point where all the time and effort of food getting and cooking comes to fruition in a meal, served to hungry recipients. The type of food served, the dishes, will depend upon the place and will be influenced by the local cuisine, the personal tastes of those who offer the meal, and those who will dine. After the meal is eaten, the food is gone, perhaps forgotten, the memory of conversations and togetherness will linger. This act of eating makes food the cement for our social relationships; it is our social contract materialized, and the vehicle for presenting and claiming our social identity. Intimate gastro-politics are played out through meals, the seating and serving order, manners, and conversations, all dramatizing the social statuses of the diners. This is important identity work. Meals, and their social and cultural consequences, are explored throughout this chapter, moving from eating at home—the site of home cuisine, exclusively with members of our family, kin, friends, or community—to the next chapter's exploration of eating out, inclusively with strangers, who are willing to pay for food and eat the public cuisine of others and themselves.

MEALS: PATTERNS OF EATING

Meals are defined as the act of eating food, and as the food itself that is consumed. Initially a response to hunger, eased by cooperative food getting and sharing, meals continue to serve nutritional and social purposes. They are the occasion of commensality—sharing food in the company of others—but solitary eating is also common. Daily meals are so ubiquitous, so taken for granted, that their importance is overlooked; and yet, across the world people make time to eat together. The patterns that organize eating are based on place, time, food, behaviour, and company. Everyone works within these patterns, which provide a reassuring orderliness to life, and within this structure there are many opportunities to exercise our will and to make decisions concerning our course of action. For example, at any meal our choices will affect our nutrition, emotions, social relationships, and basic sense of identity. We are not always aware of just how significant meals are in our lives, as a site of culture in action. Meals can be differentiated by using some basic criteria: the numbers of diners, the social distance between them, the quality and quantity of food, the frequency of eating, the intensity of social drama, the inclusiveness or exclusiveness of participation, and the range of purposes contingent upon the meal. To explore the often hidden cultural patterning of meals we need to take a seat at a meal, and consider the where, when, what, how, and with whom of eating.

Where: Private to Public

The venue of a meal will directly shape the type of food consumed, the company, and the level of social ease displayed by the gathered meal takers. For instance, in the range of your daily meals, consider how eating at home differs from doing so in a public setting; how home-cooked food shared with family or friends differs from food eaten in a restaurant with strangers at other tables; and the levels of social comfort you experience in the different settings. Each venue will have different social dynamics, which are understood as social norms, and acted on as part of our social competency, exercise of personal tastes, and spontaneous responses to events. Meals provide opportunities to expand our social network, and perform our social statuses—gender, age, and class—with different people and in different places.

The archaeological record provides early evidence of eating practices ranging from domestic to communal to commercial dining. Encompassing the range from smaller, intimately scaled dwellings to large-scale spaces suited to gathering many people in one place, they also give us an indication of how cuisines are anchored in these eating sites. The domestic meals represent home cooking, the everyday aspect of cuisines, while communal venues, such as feast sites, have foods that are more elaborate in both quantity and quality, capturing the range of celebratory foods that are part of a shared cuisine, and yet also accentuate social differences (Jones 2007). In commercial venues, the cuisine becomes a commodity, reproduced over and over, in large quantities, for paying patrons.

The private-to-public continuum, most sharply drawn in large-scale, stratified societies, represents the different locations of daily life. Cross-culturally, the distinction between private and public is not especially pronounced, and work cannot be separated from all other activities of living. However, through the private/public gradation of activities, individuals' level of social ease can be distinguished; life in public carries greater pressure to conform to social norms, while life in private is less formal, more relaxed, but still subject to peer pressure and family dynamics. This private/public gradation can be simplified as home, work, and leisure for many Western-style industrial societies, with meals consumed across these places and times of living. These spaces are telling of the degree of social distance—how well people know one another—exhibited by the diners, with the greatest distance becoming more apparent in the public venues, where strangers dine together. This spatial and societal trajectory has built upon shared family meals in the home to include a wider social engagement with strangers, and has moved meals from reaffirming the social order (kinship to class based) to opportunities to assert a new status, claim a new identity, and potentially realign the social order. This is the shift from family, at-home meals to the host-and-guest relationships of feasts, and to dining away from home, all of which are explored through this chapter and into the next. However, even where there is feasting, there will be smaller, everyday meals with family; these are instrumental in maintaining ties between members of the community, as we imagine

that everyone is doing much the same, at roughly the same time, as part of our shared and imagined culture (Billig 2002; Anderson [1983] 2006). Despite commentary to the contrary, it appears that meals at home have not disappeared. They might have changed format, but they are still important and meaningful in people's lives. For example, in a study of eating out in Britain, it was discovered that while restaurant dining has increased, meals at home are still central to eating habits, with 82 per cent of those surveyed reporting cooking a main family meal every day; when meals were eaten out, 72 per cent reported they were with family members, suggesting that family meals were equally important away as at home (Warde and Martens 2000, 107–8).

When: Mealtimes

Meals are patterned by the passage of time, and this is culturally wrought within the astronomical system of the sun. The timing of meals occurs on a daily, calendrical, and special-occasion basis. Mealtimes are shaped by our energy needs, but these have been culturally influenced by the schedules of work—subsistence or waged, other activities of daily life. Your stomach may start rumbling at set times, a natural response to hunger, but when you are hungry is culturally patterned. The "when" of mealtimes exposes the patterning of time, an aspect of society, that we have little control over; consequently, less decision-making is at play. Think through your daily meals, those of a week, month, and through a year; a distinct pattern is evident, and it is determined by social class, economics, religion, and politics. This includes a work schedule, time off, holidays (statutory and leisure), and celebratory meals occasioned by rites of passage, such as birthdays, graduation, weddings, and anniversaries, all of which mark people's transitions from one social status to another.

From a cross-cultural perspective, the timing of meals is a direct consequence of daily activity patterns; hunter-gathering, pastoralism, horticulture, and agriculture all involve cooperative efforts, with halts for shared meals dictated by the rhythms of the tasks. As previously noted, when surpluses increase, some members of society will be supported by the food production of others, and their mealtime schedules will differ due to the demands of the tasks they perform. Small-scale hunter-gatherers, such as the Ju/'hoansi, eat the largest meal of the day at the end of the day when everyone makes their way back to the camp to pool the foodstuffs that have been collected or caught (Lee 2003, 51). Food is also consumed when they are out gathering; indeed, snacks are a common source of sustenance, with people browsing while they collect, which gives them necessary energy for the tasks. Pastoralists' and horticulturalists' meals are organized around the needs of the herd animals, or the activities involved in tending the gardens, such as weeding, and harvesting, and are further influenced by the extent of mobility needed to acquire food. Likewise, agriculturalists tend to have larger early meals to offset the expenditure of energy, but will take time in the middle of the day, especially in

hot climates, to eat food with the family. Interestingly, the passage of time in smaller-scale societies is described by the food-getting activities themselves, rather than stopping for meals. By contrast, in industrialized societies the passage of time is marked by breaks from work, rather than the work activities themselves regulating time. The notions of working to eat, and eating to work, help make this difference apparent.

Industrialized societies have meal schedules that are arranged by the needs of the productive schedules of the goods, services, and markets. This reorganization of time, as a consequence of the Industrial Revolution, has reoriented eating to the needs of production rather than those of the workers, thus compromising the ability to totally satisfy energy, nutritional, and social needs. As discussed in chapter 3, this was a fundamental and far-reaching change in our relation with food. The early factory workers of the Industrial Revolution, if they were able, ate fairly large breakfasts to provide energy for the beginnings of the working day, a quick lunch at work, and then a small evening meal before bed after their usual 12-hour day. This altered people's diets, and their social relationships came second to their productive lives. As previously noted, the place of sugar in the proletarian diet came from waged-work's time pattern, and it reflects capitalism's needs of just-in-time production, rather than the nutritional needs of the workers (Mintz 1985). The provision of company canteens, coffee and tea breaks, vending machines, and on-site convenience stores are all evidence of the continued shaping of eating habits to suitably energize the workforce to maintain productivity. The influence of these has been mixed—positive in the sense of making time for commensality, but also negative, if the food provided is nutritionally poor, because it can foster long-term eating habits. For instance, in a study conducted in Copenhagen, Denmark, researchers explored the effect of work on the participants' experience of lunch. It was found that where lunch was socially valued, encouraged by colleagues having the time and a place to eat together, the participants ate a healthy diet. In contrast, participants reported overeating and feeling dissatisfied in workplaces where no mealtime provisions were offered (Kristensen and Holm 2006, 165–67). However, the food itself is also important, and many companies are now willing to entertain healthier eating choices in the workplace. Ultimately, though, the researchers argue that when a society's mealtime pattern is out of step with the demands of work, it will lead to unhealthy eating habits and may help explain the rise in obesity and other eating disorders (Kristensen and Holm 2006, 154). This is an important part of the public discourse on food in Western industrial societies: the idea that healthy and sociable eating is being eroded by the demands of work and the convenience of fast food. This issue is served up again in chapter 8.

Special-occasion meals can include those that celebrate public holidays, such as nationally celebrated days, or mark religious calendrical events. Periodic feasts and fasts, the timing of of which is guided by religious calendars, often replicate the lives of the founders of the religion, or reproduce significant events from the mythological traditions (Feeley-Harnik 1995). These meals become important opportunities for the faithful to take time away from everyday life

and to publicly demonstrate allegiance to their religion's beliefs and practices. Religious feasts are rites of intensification, bringing followers together for an emotionally intense sharing of food and rituals, in which they reaffirm their beliefs and the community of the faithful. For example, in Hinduism, Diwali is the most significant annual festival, rooted in stories of the Hindu gods and coinciding with the end of the harvest. Sweet foods, such as *gulab jamun*, are characteristic of Indian feasts; as sugary and deep-fried treats able to be consumed by all castes, they momentarily unite the social order (Sen 2015, 104). For Muslims, Eid-ul-Fitr is the feast after the month-long fast of Ramadan. Fasting, turning away from everyday mealtimes, involves periods of abstinence to bring atonement, reflection, and bodily cleansing. The fast is broken with a feast, which sees Muslims round the world enjoying special foods, usually regional delicacies, and large family gatherings with kin travelling long distances to be at home for the feast. Islamic societies designate this feast day as a national holiday and allow people time to get home to celebrate. The food included at such feasts will be filled with significant meanings, reinforcing people's knowledge of their faith and adding emotional weight to ingesting food as an act of faith. These meals make apparent complex cosmological meanings by serving the "proper" foods to bring spiritual and physical health.

What: Proper Meals, Dishes, and Cuisines

The food that is consumed at meals has its own pattern or logic, organized around the venue (at home or in public), the time (of day, season, calendar), and the company (ranging from family to strangers). By considering exactly what we eat at meals, and how this changes according to spatial, temporal, and social variables, we make the cultural classification of food, with its complex meanings, visible on our plates. We use the food's meanings, often unconsciously, to evaluate a meal, and decide whether it conforms to our cultural pattern (see **Box 6.1**, Pondering Pies). Conformity is not always articulated as words but is experienced through social discomfort, a sensory assessment of lack of "fit" with accepted norms. Imagine that, as a lunch guest in a stranger's house, you are served a bowl of cereal; it is perfectly edible, but in mild shock you hesitate before eating, until you conclude, "Whatever … just weird for lunch." This invented scenario illustrates the passing confusion and discomfort we feel when our experiences are out of step with our cultural norms of the "proper" food for a specific meal.

The proper meal, as discussed by Mary Douglas ([1975] 1997), is an important component of meals and cuisines. It comprises specific food, dishes, and courses deemed culturally appropriate for the particular time of day, occasion, and gathering of people. This meal structure draws cultural and social boundaries around the food, place, time, and people, classifying them in relation to one another, creating meaning. The "properness" is used to recognize the importance of the meal and to "grade it as a minor or major event of its class, and then [judge] it as a good or bad specimen of its kind" (Douglas [1975] 1997, 42). For instance, in Britain, for a

BOX 6.1:
PONDERING PIES: GASTRO-POLITICAL SLICES

A large pie is ready to be served, made from shortcrust pastry, and hiding inside is … The beauty of a pie is the concealment of its contents. This could be a proper meal's savoury or sweet pie, made as a main course or a dessert. It has been made from pastry—from wheat flour, butter, a little sugar, and water; rested and rolled; lined and filled; topped; and baked in the oven. A pie is a work of culinary knowledge and skill, an effort to make, and indicative of an anticipated, pleasurable meal. It is a large pie, not for individual consumption, but telling of commensality, of sharing with others, and sitting to savour its flavours. The style of the pie follows expected culinary aesthetics; it is round, has a crust, a vent cut into the surface, and crimped edges to keep the contents sealed inside. The filling has been separately made, sliced to size, simmered and flavoured, with enough juice to keep it moist.

Pies have a long culinary history, often associated with Europe, but extending farther afield. The hidden, secret fillings of pies give a clue to a possible word origin: derived from "magpie," a bird that collects and hides treasures in its nest (Clarkson 2009, 15). Early pies were large, made for sharing, had lids, and held mixtures of ingredients. Today's pies come in many sizes and shapes, and have varied casings and contents, but they all have a "pie-like" quality: encasement with one substance (pastry, for example) of fillings, with everything held together as an efficient bite. Early pastry provided a shell for the contents, but was not eaten, serving instead as a baking dish. As pastry-making became more refined, so did pie-making, and an edible crust became part of the whole enjoyable experience. Pies are versatile—cooking container, serving dish, and personal slice; hot or cold, sweet or savoury, large or small, fancy or plain; endlessly fillable with creative fillings, from many cuisines.

A pie will need to be sliced, the crust cut into, and a decision made about the size of the pieces to be served. In the division of a pie, a meal's gastro-politics are acted out. Who is given the task of serving the pie? Will it be sliced out of sight, or will the dividing up become a performative event, reflecting the status of the pie slicer? The server will need to consider the social calculations of the number of pieces the pie can accommodate, and whether it will all be eaten. Who should be given the first slice? Considering the table's social order—guests, elders, youngsters, women, and men—who deserves foremost attention? With a poised knife, the anxiety of the first cut hovers over the assembly: Will the slice come out cleanly?

continues…

box 6.1 continued…

Or will it destroy the pie's aesthetics? Should the cook claim a broken piece? Who should get the second piece? A simple pie becomes gastro-political, dishing up the diners' identity, one slice at a time.

On receipt of your piece of the pie, you are acknowledged and placed in the social order, joined with your fellow pie eaters in a moment of convivial commensality. As you eat your pie, your gastronomic attention will turn to the pie's flaky pastry crust, as it mingles with the content's juicy textures and rich flavours; your mind tires of the gastro-politics, and you settle into silent enjoyment. Is domesticity materialized in a pie?

FIGURE 6.2

"Who Ate All the Pies?" A popular New Zealand pie brand that recalls the gastro-politics of sharing a pie.

weekend breakfast to be "proper" (depending on class), it should be the "full English" breakfast consisting of bacon, fried eggs, sausage, tomato, baked beans, and toast with marmalade. If this is substantial, and all the expected components are present, then it would be a major meal, and the dish—"the full English"—would be judged as a good example. Each culture has deep-seated expectations that surround what is appropriate for each meal, and also how to evaluate the quality of a particular dish. These expectations can and will change, depending upon circumstances and influences. However, the core staples and peripheral foods that make up a cuisine's ingredients are expected to be present in the appropriate proportions to make a meal proper (Mintz 1985, 9; Murcott 1982). This relates to the classifications of food discussed in chapter 1, puts them into action to guide people's expectations of what should be present, and lends meaning and value to the act of consumption. For example, in India, Ayurvedic principles operate to combine hot and cold foods at a meal, together with the expectations of a starch, such as rice or a type of bread (Pant 2010). Rice is a staple across many areas of the world, and is often regarded as essential for food to be classified as a meal, rather than a snack; its symbolic associations are so great that its absence can leave diners feeling underfed, even if they have eaten enough. While some of the cosmological meanings behind food combinations to create dishes and meals can be forgotten, such as the humoral system in European cuisines, their legacy continues in the accepted taste of combinations of flavours, such as oil and vinegar (Albala 2000, 1206). Today's nutritional advice is often so well ingrained that many people intuitively "know" whether a meal is "bad" or "good," but cannot always act appropriately, due to economic or emotional circumstances. It is in these practical instances that we all become aware of our food classifications and rules, and we feel their presence as much as think about them, calling upon all our senses to determine the appropriateness of what we are about to eat (Sutton 2001). The proper meal becomes an evaluative standard, used to determine the social value of the occasion, the food, the company, and conformity to accepted norms.

Meals, with their array of dishes, are the occasions where a cuisine is presented and remembered by those gathered to consume it. The content of a cuisine will be differentiated by the social groups within a society, making it shared and capable of marking social boundaries. Often a cuisine's ingredients act to differentiate social groups, while the flavours unify the culinary identity of the food, by crossing through all members' dishes (Rozin 1983). Furthermore, different cooking techniques can unify a cuisine, and be differentiated by application to specific meals, with lengthy preparation and cooking generally being employed for slower, more important daily and special-occasion meals. The identity of the cook, whether male or female, can add weight to the significance of a meal, such as the North American tradition of fathers making pancakes for weekend and holiday breakfasts (Adler 1981). In these ways, a cuisine moves from an abstract cultural concept into a shared experience, an extension of social and cultural ideas represented through food. A cuisine makes membership in society meaningful through the ability to imagine that everyone is eating the same dishes, at the same time, in the same manner.

FIGURE 6.3
"Full English" Proper Meal: The cultural expectations of what should be served to make a meal a "proper" version of the category—breakfast, in this instance.

The notion of "proper meals" does not end with the cuisine; it also extends into the rest of the material culture associated with eating. The types of utensils, cutlery, seating, table decoration of any type, and all of this paraphernalia, from simple to complex, convey important social and cultural messages that are easily read and understood by members of the culture. As with other forms of symbolic communication, these objects help direct and determine the appropriate behaviour of people in that context, physically guiding relaxed or formal consumption, and serving to cue the appropriate manners. In all these capacities, the proper meal concerns more than just sustenance: it is also a sustainer of social, cultural, and national identity.

How: Ritualized Commensality

This pattern concerns the rules for the sociable sharing of food, within the ritual-like structure of meals. Commensality describes the act of companionable eating with other people; it is based on an unspoken agreement to eat sociably with others, following rules conducive to maintaining ordered civility, despite the potential for social drama. Meals are a daily reminder of the social contract, the agreement to cooperate, to create society. Think of your own meals that involve sitting with others, setting aside issues, and taking time to eat together. It may be a struggle, but disagreements are kept in check, at least for a while. The ability of meals to accomplish this important social conciliation is found in their ritual-like structure. Furthermore, it materializes the cooperative effort of food getting and gift exchange, which are fundamental to creating social groups.

At the heart of commensality is the notion of sharing food, and this is a type of exchange. Food that is prepared and presented at meals in non-commercial settings is a gift. Gifts, however, differ in their social consequences, depending upon the degree of social distance between the givers and receivers. Gift exchange is called reciprocity, which is based upon three principles: to give, to receive, and to give back in a cycle of ties and positive obligations. In generalized reciprocity, between close family and friends, gifts are freely given, as part of the give-and-take of daily life. Gifts include cooperative help, such as shopping, gathering food and cooking, and the food itself. This is an expected, habitual form of behaviour that ties people together with affectionate bonds of kinship. It is a social act that everyone, everywhere, engages in on a daily basis. Some food-centred gifts, and their associated meals, can be socially louder, in that they publicly proclaim a relationship between people who are not closely related but want to be allied to one another. These meals build upon the sociability of eating, and provide a venue for controlled social drama, claiming new statuses, as part of identity work. Gifts, in this social context, carry an expectation of return, but of equally valued gifts—this is called balanced reciprocity. In other societies where the social organization is ranked, or stratified, some meals can shout a message of the superiority of the giver over the receiver when the food-gift is large and extravagant, bigger than the receiver can easily return. In this situation, commensality is based upon a different type of exchange—redistribution—where competition has entered the social relations between the exchanging parties, and the obligation to return a meal is fraught with status-enhancement politics. The social weight of these meals becomes heavier, marking them as significant, because competitive identity work

FIGURE 6.4
Chettinad Dosa Palace Lunch: Rules of commensality vary—no cutlery required with this South Indian dish of Spinach Paneer Masala Dosa.

can be costly, resulting in the loss of community respect and authority. This is the realm of feasting and competitive gastro-politics among an exclusive group of participants. Meals can also be shared in public venues where food is sold as a commodity, ready-made for consumption, at a price set through market exchange, which will be unwrapped in the next chapter.

All meals are food-centred gift exchanges, differing in local meanings, but carrying social importance, as they maintain and create relationships. The unspoken agreement for civil eating, at the heart of commensality, reigns through low-key domestic meals and the more socially charged, competitive venues of feasting. Implicated in this agreement to politely eat together are cultural rules of eating etiquette, which vary widely but are a universal (Visser 1992). Eating manners, as rules, work within cultural cosmologies, and are oriented toward ideas of cleanliness and hygiene as much as equitably sharing food. For example, rules direct the use of the right hand for eating, not the left, which is used for toiletry purposes. Utensils, such as chopsticks, spoons, and breads, reduce contagion when food is transferred from a communal dish and into the mouth. Manners concern sharing food, considering others first, and helping everyone acquire food. Furthermore, manners facilitate the respectful sharing of food within understood parameters. For example, the use of knives has to be carefully controlled against potential violence, so pointing at someone with a knife—or fork—is forbidden (Visser 1992, 184–86). Similarly, the use of chopsticks is surrounded with rules, often to avoid bad luck, including not tapping dishes, nor sticking both into a mound of food. Children are socialized to the rituals of eating through learning their cultural manners. For instance, among the Trobriand Islanders, a maternal uncle teaches children how to chew at the appropriate speed. Whether children are included at meals with adults, or eat separately, varies from one culture to another. However, they will learn the appropriate rules, which become "second nature"—until they are presented with a situation where the rules are not quite understood and the boundary of familiar to unfamiliar meals is crossed. In these moments, the power of cultural norms becomes apparent, with the feeling of discomfort of not belonging. This is the etiquette edge of gastro-politics, which is very sharp in societies with pronounced social differentiation. While commensality creates a social time for the agreeable sharing of food, there is always the possibility of gastro-politics, and manners provide some ground rules for their practice.

As a secular ritual, a meal has the power to mark its events as socially worthy and impresses upon its participants that the social contract of companionable eating must be upheld. It is a secular ritual because it is repetitively undertaken, has a predictable structure, and marks a period of time as distinct, with particular social rules for eating. The ritualized pattern of meals, which is learned from childhood, imparts order to life, and it forges emotional ties to the meanings of the food and to the act of sharing this with others. The internalized pattern impresses upon people what constitutes their food: their cuisine. Its consumption triggers sensory responses that allow this food to become embodied as part of an individual's identity.

It creates an intensely meaningful social time, different from other activities, where identity becomes apparent, and relationships are maintained and created.

Who: Kin to Strangers

Finally, meals are patterned by the number of people, and the intimacy between dining companions, which influences the nature of social relationships and identity work. Consider who you share the most meals with and how this intimacy influences your social dynamics. The ease of conversation, for instance, will attest to the depth of your relationship, and your dress sense will communicate the comfort of your home identity. This returns us to meals as locations for working out social relations, gastro-politics, and the changing dynamics of identity work. Douglas considers how meals identify social boundaries surrounding familiarity with people, and these are articulated around ideas of intimacy and distance, which she explains as crossing a "threshold of intimacy" (Douglas [1975] 1997, 41). The participation in a meal creates social boundaries, defining those who belong and those who do not. With the most intimate, close family and friends, this participation helps maintain their social relationships, based upon occupying defined statuses. By inviting guests to share a meal, social distance can be bridged, allowing them to cross boundaries and become more familiar. This is an opportunity to create social ties between people, building their relationships, and extending a supportive social network.

Each culture shares the basic social statuses: gender, age, kin, social standing, and sexuality; but the script for each role varies from one culture to another (Goffman 1959, cited in Beriss and Sutton 2007, 5). Social status is defined primarily by gender and age, with each culture having different expectations, social norms, about the roles played by men and women, young or old. Along with cooking, meals are another opportunity to observe a culture's dominant gender ideologies. Sexuality, in the ethnographic record, tends to be restricted to the heterosexual norm transferred onto gender roles. Homosexuality is only now being addressed, not because it was absent, but because it was ignored due to the biases of the observers (Mannur 2012; Ehrhardt 2012). The influence of participants' age at meals can be measured by the order of service, the type and amount of food, and the age of inclusion at the table. Other very significant statuses are derived from the kinship system, which organizes our behaviour toward parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts and uncles, cousins, and wider sets of relatives who may or may not live in the vicinity. These kin relationships have unspoken rules of behaviour that are learned through the experiences of socialization and enculturation, and are acted upon through every aspect of daily life. Kinship creates social networks that support people, and it clearly organizes access to food through family meals. As previously discussed, social standing, such as class and caste, in stratified societies can become apparent during meals, including the timing and the food to be consumed. Similarly, ethnicity can be an underlying component of meals, especially in the choices of food to be eaten, but this can become a much more active component of cross-cultural dining

FIGURE 6.5
The Remaining Sushi: A global food still subject to local diners' gastro-political manoeuvrings around the last piece.

experiences, such as those that occur in multicultural societies. Behind all of these statuses, of which individuals can simultaneously occupy many, are the dynamics of equality and inequality, the exercise of power and authority within families, communities, and society in general. It is in this capacity that eating is a form of identity work that shapes our ideas of who we are and what our social roles comprise. The exchange of food at meals, through reciprocity, redistribution, or market exchange, does create ties between people, but it also allows individuals to demonstrate their social competence, their reputation, by fulfilling the socially expected behaviour of the roles they occupy. For example, as a host, an individual's social role will be competently performed if that person displays generosity, which boosts their reputation in the eyes of their guests and garners prestige that will outlast the duration of the meal (Sutton 2001, 50). This is at the heart of what constitutes the gastro-politics of meals.

GASTRO-POLITICS

Gastro-politics is the social order in action. Imagine three diners sharing a platter of assorted cheeses, often an odd number: Who gets the last piece of cheese? Is there a polite conversation, or does someone just reach over and take the last piece without any regard for the others? The negotiation and calculation of the diners—questions about who has eaten what—are all at the heart of gastro-political action at every shared meal. These are unspoken social rules,

and when you are eating with your peers, the expectation will be equitable sharing; eating with those of higher status, however, often involves deference to their choices. To capture this manoeuvring, Appadurai coined the term "gastro-politics," while other writers have used "social drama" or "identity work" instead (Appadurai 1981; Lu and Fine 1995; Heldke 2003; Jones 2007, 8–9). As the politics of the stomach, gastro-politics identifies the importance of meals in establishing and negotiating the social relationships between eating companions through kinship, age, gender, and class. The term includes the work of making the meal, and most commonly this is the responsibility of women, which gives them a source of power within the household (Counihan 1988; 1999).

To illustrate the concept of gastro-politics we can draw upon Appadurai's examination of the gastro-politics of three "eating events" within the contexts of a household meal, a marriage feast, and the distribution of food offerings at a temple in a Tamil Brahmin community in South India. Through ethnographic work in a Tamil Brahmin community, Appadurai (1981, 508) reveals how food can work simultaneously in two opposed categories to unite people (i.e., lessen the differences between them by increasing intimacy, equality, or solidarity) and separate people (i.e., accentuate the differences through emphasizing social distance by kinship, rank, or stratification). The quality, quantity, and serving order of foods provided at meals become the means of gastro-political display. For example, within patrilineal Tamil Brahmin households, mothers-in-law have been known to manipulate the eating of their daughters-in-law to teach them to be subordinate to the elder women's household authority. In such a household, both women will be from different patrilineages, and will be outsiders, living in the house of their husbands' patrilineage. The women use gastro-politics to establish their places in the household's social order. This can involve a mother-in-law making the younger woman responsible for all cooking, but having to eat alone and only leftovers. However, a daughter-in-law can practise her own gastro-political strategies, including cooking slowly, sabotaging ingredients, and subtly diverting more food to her own husband (Appadurai 1981, 500).

Gastro-politics can be understood as the way in which individuals and groups manipulate the eating event to achieve some redefinition of the current social relationships between those sharing a meal. This is identity work that operates at many levels of status, requiring an active engagement with the roles and rules of everyday life. It is about using food as a means to negotiate a sense of self within the cultural and societal systems. Gastro-politics are exercised through daily and seasonally patterned meals, with the latter providing opportunities to celebrate the significant occasions of life, such as rites of passage, and to mark the important calendric feasts and holidays. In situations of unequal social relations, gastro-politics involves the assertion of power and authority, and its resistance. In relationships of greater equality, more subtle manoeuvrings are apparent between generations, genders, family members, and others gathered to eat together. However joyous the occasion and sumptuous the meal, gastro-politics will be operating. Intimate meal companions, hosts and guests, use the opportunity

to send messages about their acceptance of or desire to change the social order, and to make claims about their identity and status in relation to those gathered to eat together. The host and guest relationships are complex, based upon hospitality, invitation, generosity, and delayed reciprocity. A host may say, "Make yourself at home," but there are usually rules about how far a guest may go. A guest, by accepting the invitation, implicitly agrees to friendship, cooperation, and an obligation to reciprocate the invitation. This relationship is filled with expectations, and offers opportunities to thwart the intentions of the host. While solidarity and friendship can be achieved, competition and belittlement may equally be a motive.

SPECIAL MEALS: FEASTING

Widely regarded as a cultural universal, a feast is a special meal shared by two or more people for an occasion of marked significance. They display the dynamics of the social order—the nature of relations between participants, and either maintain the status quo or effect change, which is tacitly or explicitly acknowledged by the gathered participants (Powdermaker 1932; Goody 1982; Wiessner and Schiefenhövel 1996; Dietler and Hayden 2001; Jones 2007; Pitts, Pattie, and Dorling 2007; O'Connor 2008; Mellor, Blake, and Crane 2010). The definition of a feast rests upon its differentiation from an everyday meal, because it is "special" and an "occasion," regarded by members of the culture as having significance and thus requiring more conscious effort in the culturally constructed outcomes. Feasts can be regarded as "total social phenomena," meaning that while they may appear to be about the social order and capable of mediating change, they are also events that bring people together and allow other important outcomes to occur, such as marriages, storytelling, and religious rituals.

Feasts are a matter of cultural life and feature in many ethnographic accounts of the world's cultures. To bring feasting down to a specific example, in the Haida community of Old Massett, during a seven-month period, there were two memorial feasts, one wedding feast, one wedding anniversary feast, three community feasts, four lineage feasts, and two days of tribal feasting called "Every Year the Salmon Come Back." There were similarities between all these feasts, which ranged from household lineage feasts to large-scale, all-inclusive community gatherings. All involved the ritualized commensality typical of everyday meals, but the feasts were much-anticipated and talked-about events requiring considerable levels of cooperation to make the food for the guests. These feasts serve as the recurring examples to illustrate the different types of feasts that occur cross-culturally. Any feast, in whatever cultural context, will be identifiable by the following characteristics:

1. Food: Feast food will be plentiful, requiring a surplus above subsistence needs. Considerable time and effort will be involved in acquiring, processing, and cooking more food than is

needed. Men's public cooking is often involved, as is the production of foods that are distinct from everyday meals. A feast must involve eating communally. In Old Massett, the food served at the feasts ranged from Western-style turkey, ham, vegetables, potatoes, and green and ambrosia salads to "Haida stew" made from beef, carrots, potatoes, turnips, and tomatoes, and more "traditional" foods, such as barbecued salmon, halibut, crabs, herring roe and kelp, clams, and abalone. Feast foods were provided in such quantities they could be taken home as *kowkleth*, the extras by which a feast was judged.

2. Size: While feasts can be very small, there are usually more participants than at an everyday meal. In Old Massett, feast attendance ranged from 40 people at lineage events to about 300 at feasts for the whole community of Old Massett, to about 500 at feasts for the whole island community combined with guests from farther afield.

3. Participants: A feast will bring a variety of social groups together, and these can be individuals, couples, families, lineages, clans, neighbourhoods, visitors, communities, different ethnic groups, regional groups, and representatives of nation-states. At each level, different forms of gastro-politics will be played out to maintain and claim distinct personal and group identities.

4. Time: Feasts can have a designated time, such as those based upon the religious calendar, or happen when all the necessary planning comes to fruition. Feasts will be lengthy meals—the slow food of all culinary traditions. The Haida put great effort into acquiring the quantity and quality of food for feasts, extra gathering, fishing, and buying supplies to feed more than a family. This can take years of preparation, involving storage of some foods, and often this determines the final date of the feast. Otherwise, life events—births, weddings, and funerals—are the triggers for feasting. Befitting the efforts involved, feasts are lengthy, beginning in the late afternoon and ending very late at night. Time is always taken to eat, allowing the social and cultural significance of the event to be digested, and reputations to be made, remade, and remembered for future occasions.

5. Display: Feasts involve the use of special foods, or quantities of food, in vessels that are more elaborate or bigger than normal. Indeed, the context of the feast—a room seldom used, a particular palace, a restaurant, a garden—can all set apart this meal as special. People also display themselves in their finery and consume the feast conspicuously. Display defines the meal as distinct and acts to make the feast memorable, sealing its success. For instance, at Old Massett feasts, careful attention is paid to decorating the house or the community hall with Haida ceremonial banners, and people wear their ceremonial button blankets, frontlets, and jewellery. Many trestle tables are set with plates of bread rolls, crackers, iced sponge cakes, fruit pies, and piles of oranges and apples. At the first smaller feast I attended, each person's place setting included flowered plates, teacups, and saucers, using Haida elders' extensive collections of "English bone china" of which, I was always told, "we need so much—it's for the doings [feasts]."

6. Drama: The social drama accompanying feasts is an accentuated sense of ritual, of public gastro-political performance, and the activities will dramatize the social order, perhaps through differential seating, a distinct serving order, or by stories and speeches that impress upon the participants the significance of what is happening. This drama enhances the social weight of the feast and adds to its power to address social and cultural issues in an emotionally charged and memorable context. Haida feasts and potlatches are events of high drama: seating is organized by rank, speeches are made in Haida and English, traditional songs and dances are performed, and a master of ceremonies directs the proceedings. Hereditary titles are claimed, politics are discussed, laughter erupts; hours of rapt attention typify many Old Massett feasts.

To add further depth to these general characteristics of feasts, it is important to correlate them with the social organization of society, and the ways in which food is obtained and used to maintain and change the social order. For example, the Haida are a ranked society, and traditionally a complex hunter-gathering culture, producing large surpluses of food, which is used to demonstrate social standing and claim new positions. The dynamics of feasting can be understood in relation to this social structure, as illustrated in **Table 6.1**.

TYPES OF FEASTS

Moving from these general characteristics, it is possible to identify four specific feast types from the diversity of human feasting activity (Hayden 1996, 128–31; 2001, 54–58; Dietler 1996, 92–99; 2001, 75–88). This identification is a union between what the feasting participants themselves will tell you about the feast—the insider understanding—and the outsider understanding, arising from a researched comparative consideration of the functions of similar feasts (c.f. Hayden 2001, 36–38). It is important to note that feasts often have several functions, depending on the assessment of outcomes by hosts and guests.

Celebratory Feasts

These feasts celebrate an event that can encompass any scale of participants, from individuals and families to entire nation-states, on occasions such as birthdays, weddings, religious holidays (Christmas or Diwali, for example), or national holidays (for instance, Thanksgiving or Canada Day). The quality and quantity of food provided tends to distinguish these feasts from other meals (see **Box 6.2**, Celebratory Feasts). North American Thanksgiving is an example of when it is expected that everyone will eat too much in celebration of "material plenty" (Wallendorf and Arnould 1991, 17). Celebratory feasts are concerned with reinforcing existing social bonds between the participants, and they provide an opportunity to reflect on past

TABLE 6.1 Coorelation of Feasting with Social Structure

Continuum of societies differentiated by:			
Little social stratification		**Strong social stratification**	
Bands	*Tribes*	*Chiefdoms*	*States*
Egalitarian	*Ranked*		*Stratified*
Feasting will be associated with ...			
• A time of plenty, when surpluses are available. • Quantity of foods, greater amounts of common staples. • Enhancement of social bonds, maintaining egalitarian ethos. • Participants as co-hosts/co-guests.		• Time designated by tradition, or by design. • Quantity and quality of foods, common staples in profusion, presence of luxury, exotic foods—desired by many but possessed by few. Conspicuous consumption. • Demonstrations of social distance and exclusivity. • Special eating utensils, formal and often exaggerated rules and etiquette.	
• Prevalence of usual rules and etiquette of meals.			

occasions and create new shared memories as part of cultural renewal. These are not overtly competitive events, but they will still be a venue for the usual gastro-politics to be acted upon, perhaps a little more subtly.

A good example of the celebratory feast can be found in France, with the "French Gastronomic Meal" (UNESCO 2010c). The meal is known as "gastronomic" (or, by the younger generation, a "blow-out") because it entails the enjoyment of lots of good food and drink. The substance of these feasts sets them apart from everyday meals, involving careful choices from the repertoire of French recipes; shopping for special foods from markets and specialty shops; slow preparation and cooking with help from family members; and the involvement of children, who are explicitly expected to learn their family's "expertise and know-how" and experience the "joy" of the preparation and the meal. The table will be set with the best linens, cutlery, plates, and glasses. The dishes for the courses, wine pairings, and ambiance are all important to make the meal successful. This is French cuisine, showcased in its home setting. There is a formal structure to the meals, "beginning with the aperitif and ending with liqueurs, containing in between at least four successive courses, namely a starter, fish and/or meat with vegetables, cheese and dessert, the courses possibly numbering five or six depending upon the occasion" (UNESCO 2010c, 5). Seating can be based upon status, following rules of hierarchy and gender, and it is expected that participants will engage in "gastronomic discourse," talking about the smells, tastes, and textures of the food, communicating their enjoyment of the meal. The feast is a unifying practice for the whole French community—native and immigrants, as well as the French abroad. It includes

BOX 6.2:
FOODSCAPE GROUNDED: CELEBRATORY FEASTS

The French gastronomic meal stands as a national culinary event, now enshrined on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List. For it to be included on the list, the French government submitted a report outlining the importance of the meal to individual families, and to the nation (https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/gastronomic-meal-of-the-french-00437). Have a look at this submission, and consider the evidence and language used to describe the feast.

Now bring this home, and through either recall or participation, work through your own celebratory feast by applying the following steps:

- **Feast** *to celebrate an important life event: What is the occasion? Where is it held?*
- *Its commensality brings people together: Who attends, and what are their relationships?* **Draw out** *"the threshold of intimacy."*
- **Consider** *the following elements: selection of dishes, acquisition of ingredients, source of recipes, identity of the cook or cooks, time involved in preparation and cooking, transmission of culinary knowledge and skills.*
- **Describe** *the meal's elements: courses and dishes, culinary aesthetics, table settings, etiquette, time taken, the properness of the meal.*
- **Reflect** *on how the feast emphasizes the following: togetherness, the pleasures of eating, the celebratory in contrast to the everyday, the creation of memories, the sense of cuisine, tradition, and culture.*
- **Compile** *a report to acknowledge the significance of one your own celebratory feasts.*

family and friends, or whole communities, extending the threshold of intimacy to a wider group, who all come together to celebrate rites of passage, anniversaries, holidays, reunions, and achievements. The participants use the opportunity to share knowledge, renew ties, and welcome newcomers, based upon notions of "inclusion and generosity," "intercultural dialogue," and "social integration and inter-generational exchange" (UNESCO 2010c, 6). The feast is acknowledged as an important reference point for identity construction, for individuals and for the nation, giving rise to feelings of belonging and continuity (UNESCO 2010c, 3).

In Old Massett, the community has witnessed both happy and sad celebratory feasts, including several memorial feasts attended by the whole community to mark the passing of an elder. In one case, the deceased's lineage members were celebrated with a feast by the rest

FIGURE 6.6
Old Massett Celebratory Feast Tables: The tables are decorated with the best china, flatware, and bowls of fruit in readiness for the feast to begin.

of the community about three days after the burial. As the granddaughter of the deceased said, "When we lost our Nonnie (grandmother) we went to the chief and let them know, and our house was filled with people … the opposite clan came forth and they looked after us." The clan system of Eagles and Ravens was alive and well in the organization of this feast, with the opposite clan taking on the organization under the auspices of its local lineage chiefs. One lineage cooked the stew, while another set up the community hall, and the Band Council ensured that everyone in Old Massett knew when the event was being held. In Old Massett, since the 1980s, the Band Council, elders, and hereditary chiefs have actively encouraged the community to know their genealogies; this is aimed at reinvigorating clan and lineage membership in an effort to revive many cultural traditions that were in danger of being lost. The memorial feast was just one of many examples of how successfully the webs of kinship were working to unite the community.

Entrepreneurial Feasts

While the French gastronomic meal, from the point of view of the families hosting the feast, is celebratory, from the perspective of the French government they could be regarded as entrepreneurial, trying to raise the nation's culinary status through a world forum. The feast has been claimed by the French nation as worthy of inscription on the UNESCO representative list of intangible cultural heritage, because it needs safeguarding from industrial cuisine and fast

food. This French culinary anxiety will be forked through again in chapter 8. Entrepreneurial feasts are also an opportunity to gather people together, thereby helping reinforce a sense of community; they more importantly are part of individuals' and groups' competitive efforts to achieve status. Entrepreneurial feasts are often associated with societies where chiefs or more informal leaders can acquire a powerful position by hosting large meals to sway the guests to acknowledge their superiority. The attendance and acceptance of the meal signals compliance with the status claim, and through reciprocity it creates obligatory ties of allegiance. If a feast is also accompanied by a distribution of gifts, such as occurs at potlatches in Northwest Coast First Nations' communities, or *mokas* in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea, the obligatory ties are strengthened, and a shift in the ranking of chiefs or participants will become apparent by the amount of property each receives.

Entrepreneurial feasts occur in Old Massett, an example being the two-day celebration called "Every Year the Salmon Come Back." In this instance, a very successful artist had returned to his home community to host an event designed to draw attention to the importance of the salmon for the Haida. The feasts were directed toward enhancing the community and making a political point to the wider British Columbian and Canadian society about the rights of the Haida and other First Nations. Within the community, the feasts were understood as a status boost for the artist, who was regarded as successfully demonstrating his ability to mobilize his own lineage, and call upon others for support, to provide a sumptuous feast for about 500 guests over two nights. This feast involved months of planning, with lineage members meeting to assign tasks, such as baking 200 cakes and 200 pies; making a stew with 60 pounds of potatoes, 40 pounds of beef, 18 pounds of carrots and turnips, and dozens of cans of tomatoes; and catching and processing prodigious quantities of salmon and crab, and buckets of herring roe and kelp. The feasts also involved the provision of all the bone china place settings; of cooks, servers, and cleaners; and of a master of ceremonies who knew the ranking of all attendees so as to seat them according to their status. The first night's feast was Haida stew, and on the second night a more luxurious bounty representing the lineage's ability to manage its traditional resources was presented, featuring foods such as barbecued salmon and a selection of local seafood delicacies. This food was marked in the minds of the Haida as their traditional cuisine, redolent with the connection to the land and their ancestors. The feast did raise the status of the host artist, his lineage, clan, and the community of Old Massett in relation to the other Haida community of Skidegate, and of the Haida Nation itself in the eyes of other First Nations who attended. Here we can see the element of competition evident in feasting, with the different levels of guests feeling won over by sumptuous food, the generosity of the host, and the spectacle of so many gathered together to engage in speeches, singing, and dancing. The gastro-politics had realigned the social order to reflect the host's status claim, to be acknowledged as having power and authority.

Patron Feasts

Where the social order is more fixed, in terms of ranking that remains fairly constant through long periods, or where incipient stratification is apparent, feasts are often employed to reiterate and legitimize the existing unequal relations of status and power. The host will redistribute foods, usually distinguished by quantity rather than quality, to mobilize work parties or to demonstrate the host's competence to continue to rule. Unlike entrepreneurial feasts, patron feasts are not competitive acts; instead, they are about cementing the existing social order, and the surpluses needed for such feasts often come from the guests themselves. In early state-based societies, the redistribution of surpluses obtained from agriculturalists as a tribute formed the basis of large patron feasts employed by leaders to maintain their positions (Hayden 2001; Smith 2006). This is the simple gastro-political equation: controlling the food brings power and authority, which extend into the global scene of food security, as chewed through in chapter 8.

A contemporary patron-feast system can be found in many British institutions of higher education, such as the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge. Several anthropologists, when writing about food, have described these feasts, and their capacity to communicate and reproduce the social order of the scholarly community (Goody 1982; Jones 2007). There are other examples, such as the two-day celebration in Old Massett, where the Band Council hosted a small community feast on the banks of the Yakoun River; the "First Salmon" ceremony was performed, in which a salmon backbone was returned to the river in respectful thanks for continued runs of sustaining salmon. The feast consisted of "Yakoun Dogs"—strips of barbecued sockeye salmon served in hot dog buns—and brought many of the guests from the nightly feasts down to one of the main sockeye salmon rivers that had been used by the Haida for many, many generations. The area had been threatened by the possibility of gold mining, and the Band Council, together with the Council of the Haida Nation, wished to mobilize local and national support to prevent any loss of Haida territorial rights. The Band Council is part of the administrative structure of First Nations reserves as set out in the Indian Act, and it exercises the greatest amount of decision-making power through its access to federal government funds. The power of the Band Council can sometimes be at loggerheads with the traditional power of the hereditary chiefs. This was an example of a patron feast, whereby the Band Council legitimized its authority over the local population by generously providing food in return for support. As an elected body, it needed to maintain its support, and the local community deemed the hosting of feasts appropriate behaviour.

Exclusive Feasts

These are feasts that accentuate the differences of the social order, and consequently they are occasions that are uniquely suited to the display of high or haute cuisine in socially stratified

societies. Exclusive feasts can take gastro-politics to a higher global level of demonstrating power and authority, a situation to be reheated in chapter 8. The exclusivity of the feasts means that not everyone will be invited to attend; however, the knowledge of their occurrence is important. In small-scale communities, gossip is a mechanism of disseminating the news of such a feast, while in larger-scale societies, the media plays an important role in communicating the details to everyone. An exclusive feast is an example of the importance of public gastronomic discourse—how it shapes people's interest in food, allows food to have agency in representing the social order, and disseminates knowledge about what food different social groups eat. This discussion and knowledge is an important means to establish a national cuisine, which simultaneously unites and differentiates its members. The feast will display the high cuisine of the nation, out of reach of many, but recognizable enough to be claimed as similar. Exclusive feasts tend to have smaller numbers of very select guests, but the knowledge of the event, and the media, brings a large non-participatory audience. For instance, the 2008 G8 summit in Hokkaido, Japan, was an exclusive feast for the leaders of the world's most powerful economies, who enjoyed an eight-course meal of rare and luxurious Japanese delicacies. This paraded Japan's finest cuisine and most illustrious chefs on a world stage, lending prestige and fame to both. The feast was widely reported at the time, especially because it took place after the discussion of the global food crisis with African leaders, who were not invited to the feast (Winnett 2008). Other host nations, similarly showcasing their national cuisines and featuring local seasonal foods as defining ingredients, have feasted subsequent meetings. These feasts accentuate the social differences between members of society and the exclusivity of membership in the feasting group. In the case of the G8 meeting, the exclusive feast accentuated the differences between wealthy and poorer nations across the globe, and between the leaders and their own citizens. Many such feasts involve luxurious foods, unattainable by most, eaten in refined contexts, and often prepared by skilled specialists; they also provide a resource opportunity for the audience to learn about and emulate the food of the elites, often provoking a new feasting pattern in response, to retain the element of exclusivity.

In Old Massett, smaller lineage feasts I observed are an example of this exclusive type of occasion. These were held to mark birthdays and anniversaries, and to welcome returning lineage members. Hosted by senior members of a lineage, their authority commanded attendance. In keeping with the cooperative ties of kinship, and the sharing of lineage resources, these were organized "potlucks," with each lineage member bringing a pre-assigned dish to the host's house. The food was most often Western-style, but with the inclusion of local Haida culinary favourites—such as dried salmon, seaweed, octopus, and oolichan grease—that were "traditional" and from the lineage's resource base. This was the high-status food of the Haida classification system, and referenced the long-term use of such foods to underscore social standing. The food was distinct both in quantity and quality. The long trestle tables were beautifully set with china, and the seating order reflected the hierarchy of the lineage.

Speeches were always made, acknowledging everyone's contribution, and sometimes rebuking those who were not acting appropriately. The wider knowledge of these feasts was present in the community, and this reinforced the exclusive status of the lineage and their wherewithal to hold such feasts on a fairly regular basis. This type of exclusive feasting reified the social differentiation within the community, marking the ranking made legitimate through the entrepreneurial feasts of potlatching.

As mentioned, the types of feasts are not mutually exclusive, and real examples of feasts may have aspects of several types playing out at once. For example, middle-class dinner parties in Britain can be identified as exclusive feasts because they have restricted guests, one or two other local couples, but the occasion of the dinner party is known through all the couples' social networks. The hosts of the dinner party are using the opportunity to display their economic capital—an income and house large enough to invite several guests, and entertain them with a special meal—and their **cultural capital**—their culinary knowledge and skills, and their associated good taste and moral superiority, by purchasing ethically responsible ingredients. This enhances their status and has a competitive edge, as is found in an entrepreneurial feast. The exclusivity of the dinner parties strengthens the class system by providing all the diners with enhanced social networks through which they receive real advice, such as which plumbers are the best, and where to go on holiday. Although the display at a dinner party can have a

FIGURE 6.7 Celebratory Meal:
A diner's-eye view of a celebratory feast in action.

competitive edge, it also reinforces a shared middle-class identity. Furthermore, a dinner party could be celebratory, witnessing a religious holiday, such as Christmas, or a life event, such as an anniversary (Mellor, Blake, and Crane 2010). If the popularity of the Food Television Network is any indication, for the middle classes in Britain, and by extension Canada and the United States, food has become a significant element in demonstrating social competence, efficiently conforming to social roles (Warde, Martens, and Olsen 1999, 121–22). Dining out, whether at others' homes or in restaurants, becomes a topic of conversation, an occasion that can be revisited and recollected, serving as a marker of social distinction. The next chapter explores eating out, moving the experience away from exclusive groups of known diners to the commercial realm of eating with strangers.

SELECTED READINGS

Ray, Krishnendu. 2004. *The Migrant's Table: Meals and Memories in Bengali-American Households*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

This account addresses Bengali immigrants' adjustments to a new land, and connections with their homeland through sharing meals. From eating cereal at breakfast to the identity work of eating fish and rice, it moves from the gastro-politics of home to public life—in Bengal and as experienced in the United States.

Counihan, Carole M. 2009. *A Tortilla Is Like Life: Food and Culture in the San Luis Valley of Colorado*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

This ethnography describes the lives of the Hispanic population of Antonito, in the southern San Luis Valley of Colorado. It concentrates upon food-centred life histories, which are told through many interview excerpts, allowing the voices of the community to be heard. The women's stories centre on food and meals, clearly articulating their relationships with the land, water, gardens, and their families. This fine-grained material serves ample examples of gastro-politics, and more, across a small community.

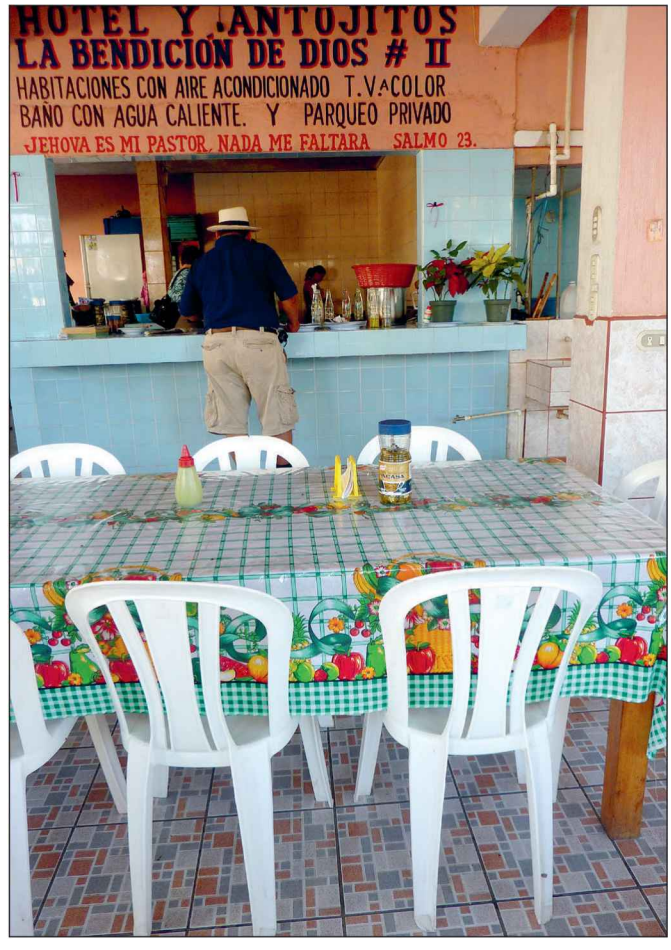

HOTEL Y ANTOJITOS
LA BENDICION DE DIOS # II
HABITACIONES CON AIRE ACONDICIONADO T.V. COLOR
BAÑO CON AGUA CALIENTE. Y PARQUEO PRIVADO
JEHOVA ES MI PASTOR, NADA ME FALTARA SALMO 23.

FIGURE 7.1

Rio Dulce *Comedor*, Guatemala: A small restaurant serving mainstream Guatemalan meals to locals and tourists.

CHAPTER SEVEN

EATING OUT AND GASTRONOMY

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- *Examine and assess the distinctions between dining at home and dining out.*
- *Describe the origins of public eating culture.*
- *Identify the importance of restaurant meals as a setting for identity work.*
- *Trace the rise of* **gastronomy** *and its role in shaping cuisines.*
- *Explore the use of cuisines as an economic resource.*
- *Assess the complexities of mainstream versus ethnic restaurants, together with the applicability of the terms.*
- *Assess the messages conveyed through restaurants, and how notions of "authenticity" are established.*

INTRODUCTION

Rio Dulce is a gateway town where passengers are ferried to the Caribbean coast, and it says farewell to Guatemalan bananas and other produce loaded into containers owned by companies like Del Monte and destined for the global market. This busy place has several restaurants, including the one pictured, which is run by a family catering to locals and travellers. The women take orders, cook the food, serve the dishes, clear up, and take payment from their customers. With its long trestle tables, decorated with plastic cloths and condiments, and surrounded by the globally ubiquitous plastic chairs, this restaurant could be anywhere. It is not marked as "Guatemalan," but it is quietly mainstream for the place, serving the nation's living cuisine. Meals consist of rice, beans, eggs, sautéed potatoes, a little grilled meat or fish, fried plantain, some cheese, a garnish of lightly pickled onion, carrots, and sliced chilies, and a tortilla.

This chapter explores restaurants as a site of cuisine shaping, and as an economic niche, catering to people who travel away from home for work, for pleasure, or in search of a new life. Restaurants can offer familiar foods, but are also a familiar format for tasting unfamiliar foods, becoming fixed **ethnosites** to encounter cuisines in all their forms (Turgeon and Pastinelli 2002). The Rio Dulce restaurant is just one example of Guatemalan cuisine, and its food can be compared to a much more self-conscious presentation of "authentic" Guatemalan cuisine at Kacao, a restaurant in Guatemala City run by a celebrity chef. Kacao serves a range of regional dishes that have become unified as Guatemalan cuisine. The menu includes *tapado*, a coconut-based fish stew from the Caribbean coast; *joćon*, a green stew with chicken; *subanik*, a spicy meat stew; and *pepian*, a spicy turkey stew with sesame and tomatoes, served with rice and tamales. Guatemalan cuisine reflects the influence of the indigenous Mayan culture and the Spanish, who brought bread, meat, and rice to the table. This restaurant's décor includes Mayan masks and pottery, and the waiters and tables are adorned with Mayan *traje* cloth. Complete with the thatched roof, candlelight, and marimba music, a Guatemalan experience is presented for the diners—both Guatemalans and tourists. These two restaurants, Rio Dulce and Kacao—both local, both Guatemalan—are typical of how a nation's cuisine is served to customers in search of sustenance, and the authentic. These restaurants set the scene to explore eating away from home, and in public—a phenomenon now taken for granted, its significance often overlooked.

EATING AWAY FROM HOME: A RISKY BUSINESS?

Up to this point, we have been discussing eating at home, with others or alone—or at another's home where food is provided by a host to invited guests, such as at a feast or dinner party. Meals eaten at home are relatively safe; the food is safe, familiar, cooked by trusted people; and the company is socially safe, with predictable gastro-politics. With the rise of the market economy, industrialization, and urbanization, people have moved farther afield in their daily business, and face the risks of finding food away from home. This can be as challenging today as in the past. The range of places to eat is staggering, as any visitor to a new city will know, and often a guidebook, a smartphone app, the local newspaper, or the advice of the locals will be sought for recommendations. A quick reflection on the range of choices available will also bring to mind some interesting social and cultural calculations: How much money do you have? How much time do you have? How far do you have to travel? Will others join you? What do you fancy eating: something you're familiar with, or something different? These questions answered, do you opt for a café, a diner, a food court, a lunch wagon, a restaurant, a fast food outlet? We are used to a wide range of choices, and to the idea of eating in public;

this has not always been the case, and it has involved our acquiring a set of social behaviours that we now take for granted.

If we look back at the history of public eating establishments, we can see that it has taken a while for this activity to become unproblematic, for both individuals and state authorities. Governments and their bureaucrats have long grappled with the need to impose regulations on the provision of food, for safety and social reasons. Today, the safety of restaurant food is often covered by government regulations stipulating best practices for food handling, temperature controls, sanitation, and employee hygiene. Despite inspections, there are still periodic outbreaks of food poisoning in the world's most restaurant-rich cities. Health risks aside, have social risks subsided? For example, early coffee houses in the sixteenth-century Middle East, and later in Europe and America, became sites for public discussion and dissent, and they stirred the possibility of upsetting the social order (Tucker 2017, 53–58). In the case of restaurants, the potential for change became more apparent—for example, in urban centres, where paid workers could mingle with the wealthier classes. In the early nineteenth century in Imperial Russia, the state attempted to prevent any intercourse between classes by controlling eating venues according to clientele and the foods they could be served (Smith 2006, 750). Today, restaurants provide a venue for people's public identity work, and have become a significant part of public society—politically, economically, and socially. On occasion, they can threaten the social order; for example, gentrification can bring elite restaurants into poorer neighbourhoods, provoking angry attacks on property and customers. Consequently, for social scientists, restaurants are an important area of study, beginning with a consideration of their shared characteristics: the provision of sustenance for a price, usually to those who by necessity or choice don't want to cook; and an acceptance of some form of public eating culture. Further differentiation can be acknowledged through the type of commodity—such as drink, snack, or meal—that is offered, the cost, the scale of the establishment, and the permanency of location. In this section, we will discuss the rise of food for sale away from home, and the processes that led to the creation of restaurants as part of Western public eating culture, which now finds worldwide acceptance.

STREET FOOD: EATING STANDING UP

In many countries, there is the opportunity to taste local food by buying from food vendors who congregate where hungry passersby can grab a bite as they go about their business. Street food is fast, portable, and usually accessibly priced. It very probably originated as food sold to accommodate the needs of a diversified workforce who had moved into urban centres, and lacked access to kitchens; and while it may have humble beginnings, it can serve as the foundation of national cuisines (see **Box 7.1**, Pondering Pizza). In Jeffrey M. Pilcher's important

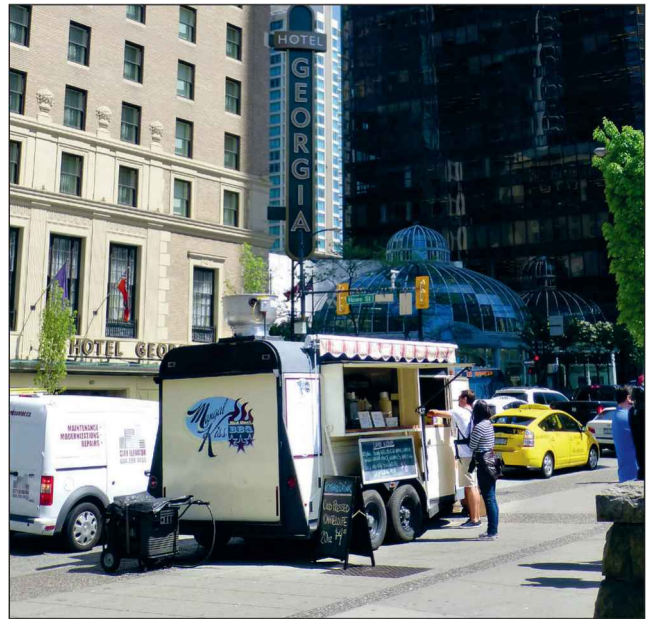


FIGURE 7.2
Food Wagon, Vancouver: Downtown food wagons serve lunch to hungry office workers.

study of the creation of Mexican cuisine, a significant role is given to female street vendors who began selling tamales at the Tlatelolco market of the Aztec city of Teotihacán (Pilcher 1998, 164). As the Mexican nation industrialized, many rural people moved into the urban centres, such as Mexico City, and in the eighteenth century there were so many street vendors catering to the kitchenless migrants that each corner had its own cook. Today's street food in Mexico continues to symbolize and acknowledge a mestizo identity with a fusion of indigenous corn and introduced wheat made into locally filled tortillas, tacos, tamales, enchiladas, and *torta compuesta*—a meat-based, rolled bread sandwich with beans, cheese, avocado, and pickled chilies (86–87). Many of these street foods, such as tacos, have gone global, becoming standard "Mexican" food for the world's diners (Pilcher 2012).

With the Mexican example, we can gain insight into the street food tradition beginning as a way to provide meals for those without the means to cook; this is often a precursor to the more fixed locations of slower food, and later fast food franchises. Given the constancy of waged labour, street food has a growing market, even in cities with many restaurants. Since 2010 the mobile food cart and wagon businesses have been successful in North America, offering low-cost dining for customers and low-cost investment for owners (Fong 2010). Class relations are played out through street foods. For instance, many people have to rely on this

BOX 7.1:

PONDERING PIZZA: STREET FOOD TO GOURMET SLICE

A pizza, with its wonderful aromas—slightly burnt bread, tangy tomatoes, basil, and a faint scent of onions—tantalizes your senses. The anticipation of the first bite, the crunchy crust giving in to your teeth, the warmth and acidity of the tomato sauce, the slight crush of the sweet onions, and the soft oiliness of the cheese. It is so satisfying as you gently chew, and savour the taste, textures, and sounds of this delicious, simple food. A moment later, you reach for another slice.

The pizza experience can be found in many venues—from homemade to delivery, fresh slice on the sidewalk to global franchises, family-run restaurants to authentic Neapolitan pizzerias. Pizza is everywhere, but it is also from somewhere, made by people and locally enjoyed.

The story of the pizza parallels people's migrations—from rural to urban areas, from Italy to America, America to Italy, and onwards, colonizing the world one flatbread with toppings at a time. Pizzas began in Naples as the street food of the city's working poor, called *lazzaroni*, after Lazarus, who rose from the dead. They were the city's kitchenless working poor, who subsisted on pizza, the perfect food to eat on the move. Pizza remained a local specialty until Italian immigrants, from the 1870s onwards, took it to North America, where it gradually became a fixture of Italian neighbourhoods and offered a livelihood for Italian families (Gabaccia 2006). North America localized pizza with different styles (e.g., deep-dish) and toppings (e.g., Hawaiian). World War II brought Italian Americans to Italy, in search of pizza—which created a market across the country (Helstosky 2008). By the 1970s, pizza had been embraced by Italy, and Naples claimed the "authentic" form, establishing the Associazione Verace Pizza Napoletana to protect its culinary heritage. To be officially verified, pizza must be made by hand, from specific, simple ingredients (durum wheat and water, with no fat) made into a risen dough, which is baked in a wood-fired oven with no tray at 750° F, and eaten at once (VPN 2017). Today there are two "authentic" Neapolitan pizzas—Pizza Margherita and Pizza Marinara—and the pizzerias will make a range of others suited to the place, with different toppings. In 2017, the culinary practices of Neapolitan *pizzaiuolo*—who make, shape, top, and bake pizzas—was recognized by UNESCO as intangible cultural heritage. Look for the authentication symbol as you search your neighbourhood for the best pizza.

continues…

box 7.1 continued…

Global pizza, while it may not exactly conform to the authentic Neapolitan requirements, does follow a recognizable format. It is this simple formula that has made pizza a success. It uses basic ingredients to make a bread, or bread-like, crust, covered with a sauce, and some toppings, often including cheese. It is relatively easy to make, and can be easily localized through including specialty foods, or given extra layers of culinary identification, by adding Greek or Indian toppings. Pizza can suit all tastes—and still be defined and identified as "pizza," whatever the toppings. It openly displays its ingredients, making its consumption free of mystery or risk. Furthermore, pizza is easy to eat, no cutlery is needed, it can be shared or eaten alone, and doesn't require that one sit. Pizza's qualities have recommended it as the perfect food, both for the street or to satisfy a gourmet desire for the authentic food of Naples. It is urban, casual, and socially differentiated by types, but unified in its recognizable style.

FIGURE 7.3

Neapolitan Pizza, Victoria: Pizza made according to "authentic" standards established by the Italian government, including the use of specific ingredients and a wood-fired oven.

food while others, such as the middle class, will choose to venture across class lines for a new foodie opportunity (Johnston and Baumann 2010; Caldwell 2012; de Solier 2013). Often mobile food vendors represent fast delivery of slow-food favourites, and many rely on social media to attract followers to their locations. With innovative dishes, often using local ingredients, many food trucks represent a culinary response to the public discourse surrounding the bad reputation of fast food. Whether slow or fast food, any type of street food fills the needs of people to find quick, affordable food while going about their business. The reputation of fast food as the scourge of the culinary world, destroying cuisines, people's health, and the environment, will be unpacked in chapters 8 and 9.

RESTAURANT FOOD: EATING SITTING DOWN

We tend to take eating in public for granted, but this was not always an acceptable social activity. For instance, prior to 1930s in Delhi, India, eating away from home was acceptable only for male workers, and women's lives tended to be conducted away from public view. Whereas there had earlier been alleyways and private courtyards, the colonial redesign of the city brought European-style plazas that opened up public gathering spaces. These spaces were prime sites for hotels and Western-style restaurants patronized by cosmopolitan role models, with menus of tempting familiar and exotic choices. These reworked the cuisine to included North Indian dishes (the local food tradition), "Continental" food (as imagined by Indians), and Indo-Chinese food that had come to Delhi from Calcutta (Siegel 2010, 72, 78, 79). Together, the foods to suit a variety of tastes, the conspicuous patronage of the restaurants by the wealthy, including well-travelled Indians and foreign visitors, normalized the culture of public eating and made it safe as a social act.

Public dining in restaurants depends upon the perception that eating out is not only about having access to food but also about making important social and cultural statements. Restaurants thus offered a new venue for identity work and for gastro-politics. Eating sitting down in public often began as the domain of the higher-status social groups, such as the wealthy of France and India, and gradually has become accepted across all class lines (Spang 2000, 89; Siegel 2010, 75). Public dining had to be capable of providing meals that could be eaten in private and moving them out into the world of strangers, giving familial gastro-politics a new venue. While gender and class restrictions did, and still do, apply, the pursuit of status by dining in public at restaurants had to became more inclusive, allowing anyone the opportunity, as long as they could pay. Public eating was born of necessity but has flourished as a means to communicate individual and group identity, and it is furthered by the public gastronomic discourse that validates the activity.

FIGURE 7.4
French Restaurant, Paris: An establishment of unmarked national identity for Parisians, but a "French" restaurant for outsiders

Western-style restaurants have become a ubiquitous part of global culture, however, as the example from Delhi reveals; this is a learned style of eating in public, which had its origins in France. Rebecca L. Spang's (2000) remarkable historical research sets the table for many, now familiar, characteristics of restaurants. Whoever began the first restaurant in the 1760s may never be known, but it was perfect timing for just such an establishment—more people were travelling, work demanded access to food away from home, dietary health was of public interest, the wealthy had a taste for fine foods, and chefs cooked for those willing to pay and sold their cookbooks to the literate (Spang 2000, 16). The earliest restaurants served light foods, such as restorative broths—from which the word "restaurant" is derived—and through the years began to serve much more substantial fare, from local soft cheeses and berries in the 1770s, to salt cod, mutton, roast chicken, fricassees, artichokes, and sauced partridges into the 1790s (48, 55, 65). By the 1820s, the restaurant as Westerners imagine it was well established and catered not just to travellers but also to a new clientele who were happy to dine away from home, to be seen, and to be comfortable dining among strangers, but at their own table. After the terror of the French Revolution, the restaurant became a place of pleasure and enjoyment, allowed by the authorities as a diversion from interfering in the government's

business (147). Dining was no longer a risky business, and instead restaurants had become "a space of urban sociability," with establishments inclusively catering to all social classes, but following a new model of service and choice, which is still characteristic of restaurants (226).

CHARACTERISTICS OF RESTAURANTS

"A restaurateur is anyone whose business consists in offering to the public a repast which is always ready, and whose dishes are served in set portions at set prices, on the order of those people who wish to eat them" (Brillat-Savarin [1825] 2009, 313). This quote from Brillat-Savarin captures his early observations about restaurant culture, and we can use his commentary to elucidate six characteristics of restaurants: commercial business setting, timing, tables, commercial kitchen, menu selections, and the performance of dining. These are now so familiar that we tend to overlook their significance for shaping people's public eating culture.

1. Commercial Business Setting

A restaurant is a commercial enterprise: a business to serve food to customers, who make choices from a menu, are served the food, eat, pay, and leave. This is a market transaction whereby food has become a commodity, but restaurants deliberately help their customers de-commodify it, and give it cultural and social meanings. Restaurant décor is an important part of meaning-making, shaping the ambiance of the space, with sounds and images, the colours of the room, the upholstery, and the temperature, all of which are carefully managed to deliver a home-away-from-home experience, or a visit to an exotic location, without the hassle of cooking. This styling extends to establishing the "ethnicity" of a restaurant—which is furthered by the menu selection of dishes—and lends a theatrical quality to those restaurants where culture is exaggerated to serve the expectations of the diners. The success of any restaurant depends upon many variables: the food, the pricing, the neighbourhood, the economy, and the culture of gastronomy all play a significant role in boosting the reputation of a restaurant. For the restaurateur, the challenge is to present foods that will tap into the tastes of customers, or to actively refashion those tastes to carve out a new market niche. The dynamic nature of this trend-led market can see restaurants open and close very rapidly, and in recent years "pop-up" restaurants have enabled younger chefs to briefly showcase their menus without too many start-up costs.

Eating out as a market transaction is somewhat anonymous, but it is also situated within the standard gastro-politics of host-and-guest relationships. There are also distinct differences between front-of-house and kitchen staff, reflecting the internal gastro-politics of restaurant

working relations. In public rooms, the host-guest relationship is based upon professional civility and provision of an intimate service. In the early days of French restaurants, in a tradition that has continued into some higher-end restaurants, the waiters were to be respected, and they ensured that the guests' manners were appropriate. Whether at home or away, there are rather precise rules for the host and guest roles, scripts that are acted upon by all involved. These scripts conform to prevailing social norms, the ideological basis of gender, age, class, ethnicity, and sexuality. These actively shape the restaurant experience. Anyone who has entered an unfamiliar restaurant will know the weight of these scripts, and the processes we go through to try to figure out how to behave appropriately. The spatial layout reflects the roles of host and guest, with the dining area as a publicly accessible place, and the cooking area as a restricted, more private space.

2. Time

As Brillat-Savarin noted, "A meal can be had at any hour, at the convenience of the diner, rather than at regular mealtimes" (Brillat-Savarin [1825] 2009, 314). This open timing of meals has continued to challenge standard societal meal patterns, appealing to the time constraints of contemporary working life as much today as in the 1820s. Many restaurants, however, open only for specific mealtimes, affording some control over working conditions and limiting the demands placed on staff. Chain restaurants and fast food outlets often occupy the "open 24 hours" market niche, catering to complex working schedules.

3. Tables

Sitting down to eat a meal is an important characteristic of restaurant dining. Based upon letters from travellers to Paris in the 1800s, it becomes apparent this was a new, unconventional, and initially discomforting, experience. Restaurants were simultaneously accessible and publicly open, but also reserved and private places, "where strangers rarely spoke to each other and certainly did not share tables," which made them "unquestionably difficult to get used to" (Spang 2000, 241). One American woman who dined in Paris in the 1840s remarked how it took a while to feel comfortable, because at first dining with others felt like a "transgression" (i.e., doing something that is socially forbidden) until eventually it "subside[d] into a feeling of agreeable abandon" (242). The act of dining in a room with strangers has now become so normal we forget how these new public spaces became a venue for private lives to be paraded, and how the old social rules of public behaviour had to be reinvented. Restaurants have become a "third" space—not home, not work, but inhabited to "do" life in public.

4. Commercial Kitchen

Restaurant kitchens are professional spaces, where public cooking has become systematized for the commercial production of large quantities of dishes. This returns us to our discussion in chapter 4 of public cooking, recipes, cuisine, and gender associations, which transformed home cooking into a commodified activity; cooking, once freely given, transformed into one pursued for an income. For early restaurants serving broths, a quickly filled order was easily accomplished. However, as restaurants began to sell more elaborate dishes, this became much more of a technological challenge, leading to new cooking styles and highly organized kitchens. While early restaurants deliberately obscured access to the kitchen, today a regulated transparency is expected; health regulations are now imposed, and with the rise of gastronomic discourse, the public has become interested in what happens in the kitchen. Trade secrets, information on where to source ingredients or about celebrity chefs' lives, and competitive cooking shows are just some examples of this fascination. The "obscurity of the kitchen"

FIGURE 7.5
Fresh Fish on the Menu, Guatemala: Rather than being printed on a menu, sometimes the freshest food choices are brought to the table.

lamented by Brillat-Savarin has ended, and the presence of the celebrity chef is expected to enhance diners' experiences ([1825] 2009, 314). However, behind the scenes, kitchens are places of gruelling hard work and often fraught labour relations, involving low pay, unsafe working conditions, little job security, tip deductions for breakages or mistakes, and often exploitation of ethnic minorities and sometimes family members. High-end restaurants are no exceptions to this scenario. The organizational model has been exported throughout the world, making restaurant kitchens part of the global economic system. This work, despite celebrity chefs, provides a precarious living, and is indicative of today's "gig" economy.

5. Menu Selections

Several aspects of restaurant food caught Brillat-Savarin's attention: fixed pricing, separate dishes, and choice to suit personal finances and the diner's gourmet tastes. For him, restaurants were "paradise" (Brillat-Savarin [1825] 2009, 314). Pricing established an interesting paradox inherent within restaurants: the generous act of sharing food now had a price, and what was once a sociable, bonding activity through a gift of food had become an impersonal commercial transaction. However, pricing prevented haggling and disciplined patrons to eat within their means. The menus of early restaurants were very expansive, of cornucopian dimensions, and provided diners with the novelty of choosing a personal selection of individualized dishes (Spang 2000, 184–92). Again, this is something we have become so familiar with that it is hard to imagine not having some choice; initially, though, some words of caution were needed from Brillat-Savarin: to avoid extravagance, otherwise indigestion would result ([1825] 2009, 316). Similarly, having separate, individualized dishes was a restaurant innovation. But in the 1820s it was worrisome, because "solitary dining strengthens egotism, and accustoms an individual to think only of himself," eroding manners, and the ritualized commensality of meals (317). Despite Brillat-Savarin's concerns, the sociability of dining has not been lost, and separate dishes, chosen by the diner, differentiated the restaurant meal from the style of a home-cooked meal, where everyone tended to eat the same dish. It has been argued that this has put more pressure upon home cooks to make meals that cater to a variety of different tastes.

Menus are about choice for the diner, but are also a defining document for the restaurant's identity as a purveyor of particular dishes and cuisines. For instance, the French restaurant menus of the 1800s included dishes and ingredients from throughout France and other parts of Europe. These dishes were often given names identifying their regional origins, such as *poulet à la Marengo*, oysters from Cancale, and ducks from Rouen (Spang 2000, 190). Coinciding with the rise of nationalism, French menus deliberately used dishes to evoke an attachment to its cuisine, making the geography of the nation taste familiar (Anderson [1983] 2006, 173). In this manner, menus took cooking knowledge, terms, and dishes out of the kitchen and into the vocabulary of diners. It brought a standardization

of the appearance, aesthetics, and tastes of dishes, sauces, and all types of foods that were shared between French restaurants. This is applicable to all menus, which are important culinary documents, bringing familiarity with the cuisine of the restaurant—and with the culture and nation. Furthermore, the direct experience of the food, presented through the restaurant's structure of courses, range of dishes, aesthetics, and flavours all serve to establish the cuisine's identity and the rules of consumption, which can be taken back into home-cooking and dining practices. Restaurant menus have built upon recipes, cookbooks to further codify national cuisines (see **Box 7.2**, Restaurants as Ethnosites).

6. Performance

By the 1850s, the act of dining in public had been normalized, but at first it was disconcerting. For instance, the presence of women dining in Parisian restaurants prompted nineteenth-century foreign tourists to foresee the demise of domesticity, whereby women would cease to cook and all meals would be eaten out (Spang 2000, 200). This did not happen, but women today do report dining out because they are "too tired to cook" and "want a change" (Roseman 2006, 5–6). The ability of restaurants to create intimate home-like settings of whatever commercialized style has successfully brought private life into public view. The gastro-politics of meals can assume a new level of intensity in public, and the negotiation of statuses and

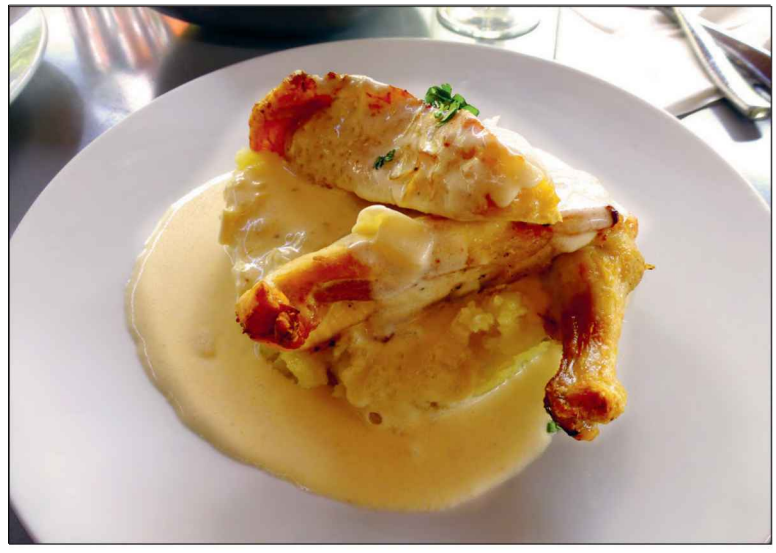


FIGURE 7.6
French Chicken Dish: French mainstream restaurant food: sauced roast chicken served on a bed of puréed cauliflower.

BOX 7.2:

FOODSCAPE GROUNDED: RESTAURANTS AS ETHNOSITES

Within your financial means, choose a restaurant to have a meal out, with family or friends. I suggest you try somewhere new, a cuisine you have not tried before, or a mainstream restaurant in a different neighbourhood. An unfamiliar place is helpful, because it is easier to be objective and notice differences. Any differences will stand out as "out of step" with the familiar patterns of the places and social relations you usually inhabit and enjoy. Make a note of these, as they will help you make comparisons and draw conclusions. Consider the restaurant as a place to get to know both a cuisine and members of an ethnic group, and to see the third space in action, where private life is lived in public.

- **Describe** *the restaurant's décor, table and place settings, layout, ambiance, and methods of communicating the cultural context of the cuisine. Is this staged authenticity? A culture commodified?*
- **Identify** *the social norms of the restaurant, the host-and-guest relationship, the expectations of restaurant-appropriate behaviour.*
- **Consider** *the presence of the kitchen, whether it is hidden and secret, or prominent and displayed. Does the cook or chef enter the restaurant, or is it purely the food that does the talking?*
- **Examine** *the menu selection, and identify the classic dishes of the cuisine. Is the country of origin recalled with place names, maps, or images? Is the menu organized by courses, and does it contain information to describe the dishes and educate the diner? Is there evidence of localization and creolization? Does the menu carry suggestions about how to order and eat the cuisine? Could your server recommend dishes for you to sample the cuisine? Does the menu claim authenticity, and if so, on what basis? What cultural impressions do you acquire from the menu as a cultural document?*
- **Assess** *the clientele of the restaurant: Who are the diners? Is there any discernible pattern? Any gastro-political insights?*
- **Experience** *the food with all your senses. Take time to identify the culinary aesthetic code of the cuisine, the colours, textures, smells, and flavours; consider how you evaluate these, and then explore your meaning-making process. What makes the food "good" to your tastes? Ask yourself why.*
- **Reflect** *on what you have learned about a cuisine, an ethnosite, identity work, and gastro-politics.*

roles will be projected beyond the threshold of intimacy, allowing strangers to engage in one another's identity work. For instance, restaurants permit a form of dining-chair participant-observation, which allows us to glimpse our own culture, and that of others, in action. Eating is life, and in restaurants we can see life while eating. Doing so reinforces the idea that everyone in society does indeed share many aspects of their lives in common with one another, helping to establish social norms surrounding the performance of identity. The act of sitting down at a restaurant table, alone or with others of our choosing, is now so familiar that it frames our encounter with our own world, and potentially that of unfamiliar cultures. The hard work of meals is transferred to others, and diners can concentrate upon enjoying the food and one another's company. In Britain, it has been found that eating out does not threaten the domestic family meal; instead it reinforces the social relations surrounding the mundane activity of preparing food for families, and underlines the normalcy of eating at home, because eating out is special (Warde and Martens 2000, 224).

GASTRONOMY: CULTIVATING CULINARY TASTE

Crucial to the rise of restaurants as important social spaces, rather than just providers of food, is the culture of gastronomy. Taste, as in the sensory responses of the tongue and nose to create the sensation of flavour and taste—the awareness of beauty, refinement, and aesthetics—have become fused in the works of gastronomic literature. The French origins of gastronomy can be traced to two individuals—Grimod de la Reynière (1758–1837) and the often-quoted Anthelme Brillat-Savarin (1755–1826). Reynière was a food critic and wrote the first restaurant guide, *L'Almanach des Gourmands*, in 1803, and Brillat-Savarin's 1825 *La Physiologie du Goût* (The Physiology of Taste) continues to be reissued, with the latest appearing in 2009. Brillat-Savarin's work echoed today's public nutritional discourse, linking eating with health. Then as now, concerns about the health of the French population were based on healthy eating, especially of French cuisine, which will be discussed in chapter 8. The early gastronomic guides would also not be out of place today, including advice on recipes, the results of tasting panels, restaurant recommendations, and showcasing retailers of specialized goods, such as hams and sausages. This was the knowledge necessary for demonstrating distinctive taste by making refined choices in public, as a means to claim status. Brillat-Savarin emphasized taste as something everyone had; it was not restricted to the privileged, but could be cultivated by experience. He made gastronomy, the pleasure and art of good eating, open to anyone, and restaurants were its temples. The cultivation of taste, from this perspective, could facilitate social mobility, a point that later sociologists, such as Pierre Bourdieu, keenly identified as serving to differentiate between people—for example, a liking for (or dislike of) foie gras could act as a social and cultural marker of a person's background (Bourdieu [1984] 1986; DeSoucey 2016).

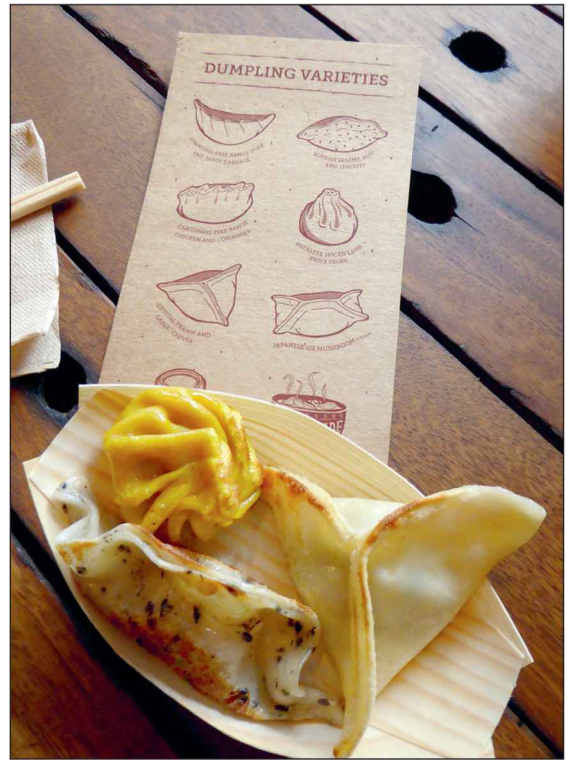


FIGURE 7.7
House of Dumplings, Wellington: Local, organic dumplings, made by Vicky Ha, following her mum's Hong Kong recipes.

Taste becomes the expression of social distinction, and in this instance, it is articulated by the taste of foods.

Today, "gastronomy" has become a widely used term denoting a fascination with all things food, and in most popular imaginings it encompasses epicureans, gourmets, and foodies. This is the knowledge that makes eating in private or public a very modern marker of social and cultural status. Gastronomy lies behind the vigorous public discourse on food, the idea of cuisine, and it has penetrated into the consciousness of all who engage in any aspect of the food industry. For example, green or "French" bean and broccoli growers in Burkina Faso and Guatemala, respectively, are aware of the demand for these aesthetically perfect foods to be available throughout the year to serve the gastronomic tastes of Western consumers (Freidberg 2005; Fischer and Benson 2006). Evidence of today's culture of gastronomy lies in the profusion of published cookbooks, magazine recipes, TV cooking shows, celebrity chefs, cooking equipment, kitchen designers, cooking classes, restaurant reviews, awards, everyday food

conversations, blogs, shops that sell every imaginable ingredient, and, of course, the extensive range of restaurants in which to eat the world's culinary traditions. Our culture of gastronomy also includes many guides, rating systems, and apps detailing restaurants that are actively involved in disseminating ideas about authenticity and value, and promoting new styles of eating (Warde 2009b; de Solier 2013). Gastronomy is now so well established that advice can be offered by anyone with an interest in food rather than only specialists, just as Brillat-Savarin hoped. This is about shaping local, regional, and national cuisines, and in conjunction with restaurants, sampling and becoming familiar with other people's cuisines. Gastronomy has transformed eating beyond necessity and into a practice of pleasure and social differentiation, and a medium for negotiating identity politics. It has enabled public eating to flourish, and to be a socially meaningful activity that defines modernity. It is not, however, possible for everyone; the economic reality of poverty thwarts Brillat-Savarin's utopian dream.

"Urban mass gastronomy" has been used to explain the creation of many nations' cuisines, such as Japanese cuisine, which from 1867 onwards was shaped by the Japanese willingness to eat *yoshoku*—Western-style food—in Western-style restaurants. This style of food and dining then became part of modern Japanese *washoku* cuisine, which despite having new elements also references a strong sense of continuity with previous traditions (Cwiertka 2006, 51–55, 175). Similarly, in nineteenth-century Mexico, the upper-class gastronomical culture was focused on cooking and dining in French haute cuisine; however, it had to include uniquely Mexican flavours, such as chilies, and this too formed the beginnings of a national cuisine (Pilcher 1998, 65–66). In Britain, since the 1950s, cookbook writers, the media, and the presence of ethnic restaurants have all been credited with establishing a culture of gastronomy that has reshaped British cuisine from bland vegetables and roast meats to a modern, domesticated, multicultural cuisine (Panayi 2008). In all these instances, there is significant linkage between the rise in talking about food, the act of going out to eat food, home cooking, and the shaping of cuisine: one's own, and that of other cultures.

TYPES OF RESTAURANTS: GASTRONOMIC FOODSCAPES

From the beginning, Western-style restaurants were associated with the progress and modernity that brought changes to the eating habits of the French, and since then the restaurant model has been exported and elaborated across the world. The concept of the restaurant is enmeshed in the prevailing circumstances of the time period—nationalism, capitalism, industrialization, and colonialism—and its appeal can be located in the changes that these processes wrought on ordinary people's working lives, living conditions, attitudes and expectations, consumption patterns, and mobility. There are now many types of restaurants, and all involve the production of styles of food based upon specific cuisines, served according to the incomes and

tastes of each society. The gastronomic foodscape is the range of restaurants in any one society, which represents the long-term history of settlement and migration of different ethnic groups through time and is indicative of the prevailing ethnic relations operating in a territory. It will become apparent that there are mainstream restaurants reflecting the dominant ethnic groups that have shaped a society's institutions; restaurants indicative of more recent immigrant ethnic groups, sometimes from former colonies; and, in some instances, restaurants exemplifying the cultures of indigenous peoples. Not all ethnic groups enter the restaurant business, but it has become an important economic niche for many.

Indigenous Restaurants

The designation of indigenous status is one fraught with political ramifications, and it has a long history of denial, suppression, and begrudging recognition within states. Indigenous peoples of the world, as the original inhabitants of a land, have long, settled culinary traditions, as noted in chapter 2. Depending upon the scale of those societies and their assimilation into the market economy, some will have restaurants that serve local community members, but many have not moved into the world culinary scene. In some instances, such as in Mexico and Guatemala, the local restaurants will serve the indigenous cuisine of the region, and if members of those communities migrate elsewhere in the world, their restaurants will become marked as ethnic, being representative of their homeland's culture. However, in societies such as India, Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand, the United States, and Canada, indigenous peoples have limited representation in the restaurant business. For instance, in Canada there are very few restaurants serving the cuisines of the local indigenous peoples. Where indigenous restaurants do exist, they serve dishes composed of ingredients drawn from traditional subsistence practices, such bison, muskox, deer, salmon, wild rice, and foods that arose from contact, such as bannock. Further, these foods have been adapted to the fine-dining style aesthetics of metropolitan centres, such as Vancouver and Toronto, or to the more casual dining style of resorts, such as in British Columbia's Okanagan. This is a cuisine that is not stuck in some traditional past but is as contemporary as any other cuisine, showing new styles of cooking, presentation, and ingredients. Indigenous restaurants are becoming more popular, and while they generally cater to non-indigenous clientele (often due to income disparities), they suggest new economic opportunities for indigenous peoples. For instance, one indigenous chef, Dickie Yuzicapi, used the popularity of the Canadian Food Network's Top Chef Competition as an opportunity to bring indigenous cuisine to the attention of his own community, and began a "cooking for reconciliation" project to educate non-indigenous Canadians (Trembath 2017). The mainstream presence of indigenous cooking is often found in "Pacific Northwest" restaurants that serve dishes using local indigenous ingredients, such as salmon, and make reference to local cooking techniques, including cedar plank barbecuing, and some are decorated using

FIGURE 7.8
Charcoal Lane Restaurant, Melbourne: Indigenous Australian restaurant, training local youth and serving locally sourced and inspired dishes, such as this chargrilled kangaroo sirloin.

indigenous peoples' artwork. This showcasing of indigenous dishes has long been part of shaping a Canadian cuisine from regional and ethnic influences, such as occurred at the 1967 Expo in Montreal (Richman Kenneally 2008).

Generally, however, smaller-scale cultures and indigenous peoples are absent from the restaurant scene, as explored by Carolyn Morris in Aotearoa New Zealand. Here, the indigenous Maori are deemed by the dominant British-origin Pākehā (settler) society to have an unpalatable cuisine, which deters their patronage of Maori restaurants. The Maori themselves tend to be economically marginalized, making careers in restaurants untenable, and they have other venues for reinforcing cultural traditions, such as at a *marae's wharenui*, which make Maori restaurants less relevant (Morris 2010, 6–7). This is also true for many indigenous communities in Canada, such as the Haida, who continue to eat their living cuisine at home and at feasts, as discussed in the previous chapter. The access to the traditional ingredients and flavours are important, part of food sovereignty issues, and it is home and community cooking, not commercial ventures, that are the venues for eating their own cuisine.

FIGURE 7.9
Fish and Chips, Charlottetown: British fish and chips are a common offering in many Canadian cities—a reflection of the country's immigration history.

Mainstream Restaurants

As nations take on distinct territorial, political, economic, and social identities, their cultural markers, such as language, music, art, literature, architecture, and food, assume important roles in defining the meaning and value of that identity. While cuisines such as French, Italian, Greek, and Spanish have successfully launched themselves onto the world culinary stage, the cuisines of the nations that were founded by the greatest influxes of immigrants—Canada, the United States, Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand, and South Africa—have grappled with the challenge of creating culinary unity from culinary diversity. Similarly, the former colonial powers that have become the diaspora homes of their colonies' citizens, such as Britain, France, and Italy, are likewise ruminating over the changing nature of their long-formulated traditional cuisines. From the point of view of the state, a national identity, associated with citizenship, needs to be constructed in order for people to have a sense of belonging. States have not always extended this sense of belonging on an equal basis, and within the histories of fraught ethnic relations, institutionalized racism continues to lurk. Some state policies are a form of multiculturalism employed to foster an overarching identity, such as

Canadian, British, or American, while ethnic groups maintain a distinct presence within society. Members of the ethnic groups will often express their connection, through successive generations, to their ancestors' cultures and often homelands. This sense of belonging to an ethnic group—ethnicity—is a complex form of identification that waxes and wanes according to context. Ethnicity is just one aspect of people's very complex sets of nested identities, based upon such things as gender, age, sexuality, class, neighbourhood, city, region, and nation, which are used throughout daily life depending upon circumstances. The national identity is often constructed using the culture of the dominant ethnic group(s) in society, and they will be the societal image-makers and constitute the "mainstream."

In a multicultural society, the term "ethnic" tends to be used to define "others," outsiders, while the mainstream doesn't see themselves as an ethnic group. Thus, "ethnic" is a relational term used by the dominant group in society to define the subordinate (Turgeon and Pastinelli 2002, 252). But care must be taken not to essentialize the complexity of plural societies into the "mainstream" and "the rest," since there are complex relationships between all ethnic groups, such as within Chinese ethnic groups, or between Chinese and Japanese, or between northern and southern Italians (Narayan 1995, 17). For instance, to return to the absence of Maori restaurants in Aotearoa New Zealand, the British were the society-shaping ethnic group, and they and their food "are unmarked ethnically" or are "culinarily neutral" (Morris 2010, 18). However, the basic meal pattern and the type of food eaten in the country are derived from this culinary ancestry, and they are so pervasive that their cultural or ethnic origins have been forgotten and normalized. Similarly, in Canada, the societal image-maker ethnic groups were the French and the British, and the European-style society that Canada has become is based upon the adaptive culture of these two groups. In Britain, Britishness represented the descendants of the Anglo-Saxons and Celts who inhabited the islands, with the inclusion of the Normans and other European conquerors through the centuries. It was largely a white population but now includes many migrants from Britain's former colonies, changing the makeup of Britishness to include the newcomers. The cuisines of plural societies will reflect the power of the social order; the dominant ethnic groups will form the culinary vocabulary, and the accent will include references to all the other contextual influences—history, place, ethnic groups, and availability of foods.

Exactly what constitutes a mainstream restaurant will vary by context, and it is easier to identify one in contrast to ones with explicit references to an ethnic group. But even this can be challenging, making the changing nature of societal identity become apparent. For example, a public house, or "pub," on a high street in Britain does not make any specific appeal to Britishness; rather it is taken for granted. Canada's mainstream references Britishness, but it has been transformed by the new context. The concept of the pub can be Canadianized by having servers and a more restaurant-like quality, with no décor references to British culture and TVs tuned to hockey. The dishes served, such as BLTs, hot chicken wings, smoked meat

FIGURE 7.10
Chinese Restaurant, Paris: The foodscape of global cities includes the diverse cuisines of migrants.

sandwiches, hamburgers, and pizzas, will reference North American cuisine. Or the pub can be an explicit reproduction and exaggeration of a British pub, down to wooden wainscoting, beer mats, horse brasses, and pictures of British scenes—and particularly ethnically marked beers and foods, such as fish and chips.

Many mainstream restaurants will include dishes on their menus that are representative of other ethnic groups in the midst of the society. Italian cuisine, for instance, has become mainstreamed, with pasta and pizza losing their ethnic marker for many. This process of **mainstreaming** is how all cuisines have been shaped, adapting ingredients, flavours, new styles of cooking, and dishes that enter into the culinary field of society. For instance, in Japan from 1867 onwards, the modern Japanese cuisine, *washoku*, was gradually shaped through the influence of the West, the military's interest in diet and nutrition for conscripts, the modernizing of home cooking, wartime rationing, imperialism, and postwar affluence (Cwiertka 2006). The range of Japanese restaurants in Japan, from highly refined *kaiseki* to conveyor-belt sushi places—*kaitenzushi*—are all mainstream examples that serve the range of foods that are now imagined as being essentially Japanese, for the Japanese. Many people in Japan do dine out regularly at Japanese restaurants, thereby maintaining the Japanese cuisine in all its forms (Cwiertka 2006, 114). The export of Japanese cuisine around the world will be explored in the next chapter, where mainstreaming is reinventing sushi as a global fast food with local manifestations in each society.

Immigrants and Ethnic Restaurants

New immigrants are often given nutritional advice to help them assimilate to their new home, to eat like the mainstream—including drinking milk—and abandon their culinary traditions, even as, at the same time, the affluent are celebrating the immigrants' unique ethnic cuisines. In Canada, beginning in the 1950s, new immigrants in urban centres were subjected to nutritional and culinary advice from the government, which, for instance, included the recommendation to buy cheaper Canadian oils instead of expensive imported olive oil (Iacovetta 2000, 16). This advice sought to redefine the immigrants' culinary practices to fit within the norm of three nutritionally balanced meals a day, suited to school and work schedules, and to instil the wisdom of adopting economical and convenient shopping habits (buying frozen and canned ingredients), drinking more milk, and embracing the "Canadian way" of stay-at-home mums working in well-equipped kitchens (Iacovetta 2000, 15–16). Immigrants often come to lands of abundance, and yet they are faced with the harsh reality of not earning enough to buy the foods they want nor the housing they need or want, and are torn by the demands of work, family, and the new society's expectations of their participation. It can take many years to become sufficiently well established to allow a return to previously experienced cooking and eating, and by then tastes will probably have subtly or dramatically changed. Yet the nostalgic desire for the foods of home has often created an economic niche for many immigrants: opening shops that import specialty foods, or restaurants that can equally serve their own community and interested others. The culinary reality for immigrants is one of constraints and opportunities, mediated by finances and the availability of ingredients, time, and desire. Reflecting the history and circumstances of immigration, the presence of ethnic restaurants is an indisputable fact of contemporary life. The changing presence of ethnic restaurants has become a starting point for many researchers to examine mainstream attitudes toward ethnic groups (Turgeon and Pastinelli 2002; Ray 2007; Gvion and Trostler 2008). Ray, for instance, provides an overview of changing trends in American restaurants, and how taste and the prestige of cuisines have changed over time. He begins with the nineteenth century, when French food was imagined as the epitome of good taste; then, as Italian-Americans rose up the social ladder, their food was reimagined as worthy (Ray 2007, 101–3). Ray makes the connection between the acceptance of the ethnic group by mainstream society, often after immigration of that particular group has lessened, and the willingness to eat their cuisine. Today, few people would think of Italian food as "ethnic," as it has become readily incorporated into the mainstream diet with no "ethnic" baggage attached—just as no one would direct racist slurs against the Italians, since they have become mainstreamed. Ray uses the example of Japanese food, which is now a "designer commodity," since Japanese migration to the United States is low, Japanese-Americans have become normalized, and Japan is a major economic and cultural power (101–3). He identifies an inverse relationship between immigration and the prestige of

an ethnic group's cuisine. For example, he charts the decline in prestige of Chinese restaurants in New York, which coincided with increased immigration of Chinese to New York, and he postulates that unless migration slows, the decline in prestige will continue (104). Interestingly, new immigrants can disguise their presence by operating restaurants serving the prestige food of other ethnic groups, as evidenced in many Chinese-owned sushi restaurants. At the turn of nineteenth century, this strategy saw Italians owning French restaurants, and now, in the twenty-first century, many Bangladeshis own Indian restaurants (Ray 2007, 111–12).

Ethnic restaurants often follow the pattern of first serving the needs of their own community, after which adventurous mainstream diners popularize the cuisine, opening up an economic niche that allows successive immigrants to find employment in their new homeland (Roberts 2002; Ray 2007). The presence of new immigrants as owners of restaurants is linked to a number of factors. First, there has to be a well-established culture of dining out, so that it is a viable economic niche for immigrants and locals alike. Second, the restaurant business needs to be attractive to new immigrants. It cannot be that all ethnic groups want to spread the tradition of their cuisine across the globe, and indeed, some ethnic groups do seem to resist opening restaurants—such as people from the Caribbean, and Iranians in Britain.

12. BUTTER CHICKEN $10.99
Chicken breast cooked in a creamy butter sauce
13. CHILLI CHICKEN $10.99
Chicken breast, onions, bell peppers cooked in a tomato based chilli sauce
14. CURRY CHICKEN $10.99
Chicken thigh, onions, garlic, ginger, cooked in a tomato based curry sauce
15. CHICKEN SAAG $10.99
Chicken thigh, spinach, onions, garlic, ginger, Indian spices
16. CHICKEN TIKKA MASALA $10.99
Chicken breast, onions, cooked in butter sauce with blend of Indian spices
17. KARAHI CHICKEN $10.99
Chicken thigh, onions, garlic, ginger, Indian spices
18. CHICKEN KORMA $11.99
Chicken thigh, coconut, nuts, creamy sauce
19. CHICKEN VINDALOO $10.99
Chicken thigh, potatoes, coconut in tangy sauce

FIGURE 7.11
Indian Restaurant Menu, Canada: The Anglo-Indian dish of chicken tikka masala has found a place on global Indian cuisine menus.

The success of a cuisine in another land, as mentioned, will depend upon the mainstream society's presumption of palatability, and it can be tainted by racist assumptions about the people (Cook and Harrison 2003; Morris 2010, 18). However, urban mass gastronomy, and the social strategy of wealthier, educated, restaurant patrons to exercise their **cultural omnivorousness**, have made ethnic restaurants an attractive, albeit labour-intensive, option for immigrants. Returning to Ray's (2007) exploration of how restaurants reflect the immigration of successive ethnic groups into the United States, he includes four factors that point to restaurants as viable employment options for immigrants. First, low capital cost means it is relatively easy to open a restaurant without massive financial expense. Second, the presumed cultural capital of "authentic" knowledge of the cuisine that a member of the ethnic group must surely have will give them an edge in a competitive market. Third, the social capital available to the restaurateur, through their loyal kin and friends within the ethnic community means they can borrow money and draw upon workers who will be willing to work long hours for little pay. Lastly, the serial pattern of migrants moving into this niche facilitates the sharing of expertise and establishes the presence of the restaurant within mainstream society (Ray 2007, 112). With this in mind we can explore some specific examples.

ETHNIC CUISINES: DIASPORA DINING

Indian Cuisine in Britain

Britain's long association with India through its imperial control during the Raj has seen Indian restaurants become a standard of every town in the nation (James 1996). The taste for curry—as a sensuous experience and a social statement—was appropriated and adopted into British cuisine not just because people liked spicy food; its hold was established through a variety of influences and circumstances, bringing an intensification of meanings and extensive opportunities to make, buy, and eat curry—just as occurred for sugar (Mintz 1985). While in India, Britons acquired the taste for Indian food, made generic as "curry," an essentialized taste of a complex cuisine. On returning from their colonial duties, they took that taste with them, together with curry powder and condiments to spice up the cooking of the motherland. Cookbooks were instrumental in bringing the culinary know-how to Britain, and later expanded "curry" to include the standardized menu dishes of Indian cuisine, allowing home cooks to make *kormas*, *rogan josh*, *biryanis*, and *masalas* (Panayi 2008, 32–33). This created Anglo-Indian cuisine, including chicken tikka masala, now embraced as British. However, while curry has been appropriated as a dish of British cuisine, born of colonialism, it is a mainstay of the diaspora Indian restaurant community (Narayan 1995; Collingham 2006; Panayi 2008; Maroney 2011). This influence helped refine British taste beyond spicy curry

and into more complex flavours and dishes, referencing India's cuisines. In 1811, London's "Hindostanee Coffee House" was one of the first "Indian" restaurants, many of which are now run by Bangladeshis from the region of Sylhet (Collingham 2006, 129). The Sylhetis came to Britain as boilermen on ships, and some stayed to open cafés to serve their fellow seamen. This established this ethnic group within what was to become the "Indian" restaurant niche (217–18). It wasn't until World War II that Indian restaurants became a constant of the British streetscape. The Sylhetis began buying bombed-out fish and chip shops, opening them and selling pies, peas, fish and chips, curry and rice, and curry and chips (Collingham 2006, 223). This truly moved Indian food into the heart of working-class life and established its place in the minds of many British people as a part of their culinary tradition, especially as a late-night snack after pub closing time. The style of this food was shaped for British tastes, with a standardized range of spiced dishes, from mild *kormas* to hot *vindaloos*. Restaurant menus over the decades have been updated with two new styles of "authentic" Indian cuisine—in the 1960s, with tandoori-style cooking, beginning in London and later in Glasgow, giving rise to chicken tikka masala; and in the 1980s, with Balti-style cooking, beginning in Birmingham (Panayi 2008, 33). Today there are over 12,000 Indian restaurants in Britain, outnumbering fish and chip shops, employing more than 100,000 people, and generating an estimated £4.2 billion in revenue (Moore 2016).

There are still generally two types of Indian restaurant in Britain: the small, family-run restaurants that serve the standardized Indian cuisine, and newer restaurants serving regional cuisines of India, such as Goan, Kashmiri, and Gujarati. This diversification of the market is an attempt to increase business by appealing to more affluent, discerning diners who are keen to proclaim their choice of a Kashmiri dish over a chicken tikka masala. The rebranding of Indian cuisine in Britain called for chefs from India to immigrate and refine the restaurants' menus, and the need for workers in the older Indian restaurants has arisen because many of the second generation of British Asians do not want to follow their parents into the restaurant business, instead preferring to become white-collar professionals. In the past, many owners brought new immigrants to Britain, often family members, to fill the restaurant jobs. However, governmental tightening of immigration requirements, particularly directed at non-EU immigrants, has made it difficult for restaurant cooks and chefs to come from India and Bangladesh. The requirements now stipulate the type of culinary training a chef must have, and that their annual salary must be more than £28,000—more than many restaurateurs can afford, if they want to stay in business. The recent economic downturn has hit Britain's curry industry hard, with fewer Britons going out to eat, and it is estimated that two to three curry restaurants are closing per week. This has been called "the curry crisis," striking at the heart of the restaurant industry, and despite Britons' continuing love of curry, many of them are making it at home, buying it in supermarkets as ready-made meals, or eating it in pubs, where chicken tikka masala is one of the most popular dishes (Moore 2016). The curry has become

FIGURE 7.12
Chinese Restaurant, San Francisco: Place setting at a Chinese-American restaurant in San Francisco's Chinatown.

so mainstreamed that it can be made by anyone, regardless of their ethnicity, but it is still an important ethnic marker for South Asians. The curry crisis has brought restaurateurs to the point of reclaiming *their* food as authentic, no one else's. It is argued that to keep "the British curry" alive, it needs to be eaten at a table in a restaurant, called The Agra or Kohinoor, to support the livelihoods of local British families (Wilson 2017).

Chinese Cuisine in North America

The story of curry in Britain follows the same pattern as that of Chinese immigrants, both in Britain and particularly in North America, where the dish chop suey is perhaps the equivalent of chicken tikka masala (Coe 2009). The first Chinese immigrants were male workers

for the mining industry and railroad construction. Some of these workers were cooks, whose skills shaped a taste for Chinese food in the non-Chinese workers, and this began the Westernization of the cuisine. Chinese restaurants opened in many ghettoized Chinatowns to serve the needs of the kitchenless men, and slowly the adventurous non-Chinese cultural omnivores—gastronomic taste-makers—began to dine away from the mainstream. These diners became role models, propelling Chinese restaurants and food away from Chinatown and into virtually every North American town. This movement was so successful that Chinese food has become "mainstreamed"; it now appears on the menus of many non-Chinese restaurants and has become a standard of many non-Chinese home cooks. The style of the cuisine has been adapted to a new range of ingredients and domesticated to the tastes of non-Chinese consumers. Chop suey, chow mein, and lemon chicken are all derivatives of Chinese cuisine, but shaped to the new circumstances in which their inventors found themselves (Li 2002; Roberts 2002; Barbas 2003; Gvion and Trostler 2008; Coe 2009; Gunew 2009; Cho 2010). Li, who explores Chinese-American restaurants from the perspective of an insider, explains how the food has been adapted to the new context, with ingredients substituted and the order of serving dishes altered—from the traditional format of tea, appetizer, main course, soup, and tea again—to soup, meal, and dessert (Li 2002, 337). This, she notes, is particularly apparent in Chinese-American—and, by extension, Chinese-Canadian—restaurants in towns where very few Chinese people live. Li identifies the inclusion of "salads, sandwiches, and steaks" on the menus of Chinese restaurants as indicative of assimilation, but in a positive sense of adding dynamism to the restaurants, as these dishes offer an explicit statement of what American or Canadian cuisine entails. Through the eyes of Chinese proprietors, mainstream cuisines consist of breakfast dishes, hamburgers and fries, soup, sandwiches, pies, and weak coffee, all served to bring a steady income (Li 2002, 341; Cho 2010, 44–47). Fortune cookies are adaptations to the new North American context, built upon a Chinese tradition of lucky dumplings made by families for New Year. Only one dumpling would hold a lucky coin, and whichever family member got that dumpling would have good luck for the year. In contrast, dumpling-shaped fortune cookies all have luck inside, referencing "the American attitude that everyone should have an equal opportunity to get a piece of fortune" (Li 2002, 339).

RESTAURANTS AS "ETHNOSITES": CROSS-CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS

Ethnic restaurants, like all other restaurants, are open to anyone willing to pay for a meal (see **Box 7.2**, Restaurants as Ethnosites). They can cater to members of their own ethnic group, or to outsiders. In this context, ethnic restaurants are understood as "ethnosites," where immigrants can eat their own food and reaffirm their identity, or where members of mainstream society eat the food of other ethnic groups (Turgeon and Pastinelli 2002, 250). Ethnosites

are about encounters between individuals as parts of larger ethnically defined communities, including the mainstream. In these spaces, the complex gastro-politics of identity work, at the level of individuals and ethnic groups in plural states, are performed through "authentic" food served as commercial transaction. This is about the power to claim an appropriate cuisine, to resist and reclaim authenticity, and to constantly rework identity through the public consumption of food.

If we begin at the level of relations between the specific ethnic groups and the mainstream, we see that the previous two examples—Indian and Chinese cuisines—reveal the complexities of ethnicity and authenticity communicated through food. Both are constructed concepts, which depend upon a contrast between "other" people, or "other" food, to establish their value. Researchers are interested in how restaurants market their food as authentic, exotic cuisine, while at the same time presenting it as palatable to mainstream tastes. Ethnic restaurants suggest the cuisine of a cultural homeland but serve the cuisine of a new homeland—a staged authenticity (Long 2004, 36–43; Germann Molz 2004, 56–61). The cuisine is undergoing **creolization**, through adaptive changes to suit the tastes of diners, while remaining true to its culinary style. This is for commercial purposes, but it follows the same processes outlined in home cooking. Staged authenticity and creolized adaptation are contrasting strategies needed to create an economically viable market niche (Lu and Fine 1995, 536). There is a dialectical relationship between authenticity, rooted in tradition, and in creolization, which subtly changes a cuisine for a new context. Restaurateurs have to attract customers, so they present their food as authentic, "that which is believed or accepted to be genuine or real: true to itself" (Lu and Fine 1995, 538). Furthermore, authenticity can be projected by assumptions about the owners' ancestry and ethnicity, the exotic-sounding name of the restaurant, décor depicting cultural artifacts, and evocative music. But, ultimately, authenticity is relational, based upon the experience of the diner. For example, the authenticity of Indian food in Britain would be questioned by someone brought up in India, but might not be questioned by a non-Indian Briton, depending upon their social position. In ethnic restaurants, the owners and chefs are modifying their cultural resource—their marketable culinary tradition—by creolizing, adapting, innovating, or negotiating authenticity to make it workable in the competitive restaurant market. What results is still Indian or Chinese food—it suggests continuity with the originating culinary tradition—but it is changed to fit the needs of a new context. It is "authentic" for the diners, and creolized authenticity for the hosts; for both it is real food, that of the culinary "Other," and for "the Other," a culinary resource to make a living.

Turning our attention to the role of ethnic restaurants, we can observe that they serve the gastro-political needs of the local ethnic community. In a study of Mexican restaurants in Los Angeles, Ferrero (2002) similarly explores two aspects of the ethnic restaurant: as a conserver of tradition, and as an innovator forging new forms of identity. From the perspective of the non-Mexican, the restaurants can promote a commodified, staged notion of Mexicanness;

however, for the Mexican restaurateurs and diners, the food is a vehicle for maintaining a connection to their homeland and offers a strategy to undermine the dominant stereotypes. The restaurants that serve regional Mexican foods to expatriates become catalysts in forming new social groups, and help "foster a Mestizo way of being in the world" (205). To illustrate this role, Ferrero gives examples of the discussion of words, recipes, and origins of dishes, which transform the restaurants into "living rooms for the homesick" and "archives of culinary memories" (205). For their owners, the restaurants serve as an economic niche and operate within the Mexican class system, while reconfiguring the class system of the new societal context (203). Ferrero sees the restaurants as instrumental in enabling Mexicans to have some control over Mexican stereotypes, since they guide diners into their pretend world of "traditional" cuisine. She concludes, "Mexican food becomes a means to enhance forms of solidarity, and culinary and cultural resistance towards the dominant system … [and] enables Mexicans and Mexican-Americans to foster discourses of pan-ethnicity and to challenge the forms of discrimination by American society" (216). This study presents ethnic restaurants as positive institutions that serve the ethnic community's need for familiar foods and company, while also helping foster a new image of that community in the eyes of mainstream society.

Finally, let us consider the gastro-political level of diners at ethnic restaurants, whose identity work begins with the decision to eat at one of many culinary options. Market research, for example in Britain and the United States, shows that eating at ethnic restaurants correlates with higher levels of income, education, and class, but value for money is also important (Roseman 2006, 9, 22, 27). Furthermore, eating ethnic food was regarded as a positive way to "bridge cultural barriers" while also being seen as instrumental in personal identity work, such as communicating social distinction through demonstrating a broad repertoire of culinary experience, or cultural omnivorousness. The diners felt they were cosmopolitan, modern, and tolerant of ethnic diversity (Warde, Martens, and Olsen 1999, 123–24; Siegel 2010, 73, 87; de Solier 2013, 58–61). Restaurants foster cross-cultural encounters where "the Other" can be safely eaten, and where "the foreign is made familiar and the global miniaturized" (Turgeon and Pastinelli 2002, 247). With this in mind, ethnic restaurants become tourist sites—staged, exaggerated, and essentialized renditions of the culture—and diners become culinary tourists, willing to experience the cuisine, and sometimes taking postcard-like photographs to document their visit. The restaurant's creolized and staged authentic cuisine is served to suit the culinary and social tastes of the patrons. If a diner has travelled to the country of the ethnic restaurant's cuisine, they will have some previous knowledge of how the food should taste and what to expect; but for others, the food, décor, music, and servers can conjure up a world apart from their everyday reality. Again, authenticity is gauged in relation to a person's experience.

The way in which diners use ethnic restaurants as a means to construct their own sense of identity has become a hot gastro-political topic for many commentators. It is "hot" because it is a food-oriented reality check that can be discomforting and challenging, given that it takes

issue with an aspect of modern life so many people enjoy. The seemingly innocent, pleasurable, sociable experience of eating out, and trying a variety of cuisines, is called into question as exploitative, unethical, and perpetuating social inequality (Heldke 2003). The arguments reassess the eating of ethnic food by mainstream, dominant ethnic groups as a form of culinary colonialism or imperialism, which reinforce inequality in society. This idea is particularly pertinent to the British fixation with curry, Indian cuisine in general, and chicken tikka masala in particular, which has been articulated by South Asian scholars, and recently restaurateurs. Uma Narayan, for example, argues that a cuisine is yet another resource—of both sustenance and cultural significance—that can be appropriated without any regard for the people whose cuisine it is, or the social, economic, and political circumstances in which they find themselves, as immigrants or members of distant states (Narayan 1995). Commercial food, which is a commodity, also commodifies culture through ethnically marked ingredients, flavour, and dishes that hide the reality of the lives of the people who produce the restaurant meal, and those who produce its ingredients and flavours along the food chain. Indeed, the cheapness

FIGURE 7.13
Pho Soup, Vancouver: Sampling ethnic cuisines is part of many people's cosmopolitan identity work and provides a livelihood for many migrants.

of ethnic food, which diners are happy to exploit to boost their cultural capital, demands low wages, cheapens the originating people, their lives, and their culture (Narayan 1995; Heldke 2003). This places ethnic restaurants into the subservient role of providing culturally branded food through which the dominant ethnic group defines itself. While the politics of "eating ethnic" are fraught with inequalities, the economic factor must not be overlooked because the provision of food by ethnic restaurants is big business, providing incomes and supporting the local economy. The wages are not always equitable, especially in the competitive restaurant business, but this livelihood has become a reality for many. It is therefore important that people—of any ethnicity—continue to dine at ethnic restaurants, but they must do it with a greater degree of awareness.

Toward creating a more equitable dining experience and shifting the power relations, reality-check commentators present an anti-colonial eating manifesto to guide against cultural domination (Heldke 2003, 197). This manifesto includes acknowledgment that ethnic groups have the right to define their own authentic culinary traditions, which will have been creatively adapted to the new locality, and it calls upon diners to be respectful, to gain knowledge of the cuisine, and to reflect on the complexities of gender, class, privilege, and power. It brings to the fore the important sense of empathy between the consumer and producer, extending the gastro-political threshold of intimacy well beyond the edge of the table. All of this sets the scene for ethical eating—both socially and environmentally—and moves food and eating back into the wider politics of the local and global food system, which is the next chapter's destination.

SELECTED READINGS

Beriss, David, and David Sutton, eds. 2007. *The Restaurants Book: Ethnographies of Where We Eat*. New York: Berg. https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350044913.

This book provides a selection of short ethnographic analyses, which include restaurant work, identity work, and immigrants' experiences. The readings provide ample evidence of the important place of restaurants in society: as a key location for "doing life."

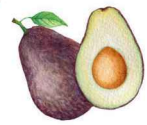
Erickson, Karla A. 2009. *The Hungry Cowboy: Service and Community in a Neighborhood Restaurant*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi. https://doi.org/10.14325/mississippi/9781604732061.001.0001.

As one of just a few ethnographies of restaurants, this book vividly fills a gap by offering the stories of workers and diners as they interact with one another. It provides a guide to watching contemporary life lived in a third space and understanding **de-commodification** in a commercial venue, and it assesses the inequalities inherent in the industry.

FIGURE 8.1

Nescafé on Guatemalan Supermarket Shelves: Instant coffee for sale in a coffee-growing country.

CHAPTER EIGHT



GLOBAL INDIGESTION

Resetting the Agenda for Food Security

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- *Describe global gastro-politics and the roles of the United Nations agencies related to them: the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization.*
- *Examine the challenges facing global food policies and the resetting of agendas.*
- *Chart grassroots responses—indigenous dietary decolonization, food sovereignty movements, and national food policies—to the global food system.*
- *Assess the attainment of food security through the four pillars approach: availability, access, stability, and utilization.*

INTRODUCTION

In Guatemala City, I had the opportunity to visit an urban supermarket located in a shopping mall, which was patrolled by shotgun-carrying male guards. Inside, it was busy, frequented largely by well-to-do women with small children, and staffed by women, with some men in supervisory positions. The supermarket could have been anywhere in the world; its aisles were stacked with branded foodstuffs, and its layout followed a familiar pattern. Processed, bottled salsas, bags of plantain chips, white Bimbo bread, packs of ready-made tortillas, breakfast cereals, cookies, candy, cheeses, vegetables, and a wide selection of meats dominated, while in among these foodstuffs were some sacks of beans and rice, staple ingredients from across Central America. The crowded shelves lacked *guicoyitos* and instead made room for mobile foodstuffs with distant origins, typical of industrial cuisine. The rows of Nescafé instant coffee were very noticeable, and perhaps not unusual, given that Guatemala is often cited as the place of its invention in the 1900s. However, alternatively, there was little evidence of Guatemalan

coffee beans, of which 3.4 million (60 kg) bags worth were grown in 2015–16, largely for export (Fischer and Victor 2014; United States Department of Agriculture [USDA] 2016). It would appear that for some in the land of coffee growing, coffee for drinking is brewed instantaneously.

These supermarket foods tell of changing eating practices, time pressures, and incomes, and hint at culinary de-skilling, new appliances, and the lure of convenience sought by shoppers. Supermarkets are full of food, bursting with the promise of food security, but are simultaneously part of the reality of food insecurity. For many around the world, this is the new normal for acquiring food—if it is affordable and available. This chapter brings us back to address the legacy of industrialized agriculture, of switching to industrial cuisine, and the gastro-politics of global governance that set in motion the globalized food system.

INDIGESTION: MALNUTRITION AND GLOBAL GASTRO-POLITICS

In 2015, world antacid sales reached nearly US$2 billion, suggesting that many people suffer from indigestion—dyspepsia, often caused by diet (PRNewswire 2016). Its symptoms of heartburn, nausea, and uncomfortable fullness can be temporarily treated, but lifestyle changes are recommended for lasting relief. At a global level, indigestion translates as malnutrition: prolonged suffering for millions of people, directly related to the food system and its failures. Its treatment: fix the food system, and work toward an equitable global society. Easy to prescribe, but difficult to accomplish. Malnutrition, on a global scale, has long-term effects on the health and life chances of individuals, and the prosperity of wider society. It has been called a "triple burden": undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, and overweight and obesity. These occur in the same countries, and sometimes in the same households. Undernutrition, the condition of not having enough to eat causes wasting (being too thin) and stunting (height), which makes people susceptible to contagious diseases and can impair their mental development. Micronutrient deficiencies, such as the lack of specific vitamins, lead to health problems, such as blindness from inadequate vitamin A intake, or anemia from low iron. An unbalanced diet, with excess intake of calories to energy expended, causes overweight and obesity, making individuals highly susceptible to NCDs (World Health Organization [WHO] 2016). For some people, malnutrition means not enough food, and for others it is too much food. Global indigestion, directly related to food, can be captured by the following statistics:

Out of a world population of **7 billion**
About **2 billion** people suffer from micronutrient malnutrition
Nearly **800 million** people suffer from calorie deficiency
Out of **5 billion** adults worldwide

Nearly **2 billion** are overweight or obese

One in 12 has type 2 diabetes

Out of **667 million** children under age 5 worldwide

159 million under age 5 are too short for their age (stunted)

50 million do not weigh enough for their height (wasted)

41 million are overweight

Out of 129 countries with data, **57 countries**

have serious levels of both undernutrition and adult overweight (including obesity)

(International Food Policy Research Institute [IFPRI 2016], 2)

In 1948, the basic human right to food was enshrined in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, and this launched global initiatives to feed the world as emergency aid (an antacid), and as long-term lifestyle changes (through industrializing agriculture to produce more food). The goal was to achieve global food security. Food security, at a basic level, is about having access to available food in order to satisfy hunger, provide energy and necessary nutrients, and ensure health. A twentieth-century term for a fundamental aspect of human existence, food security has always involved strategies to plan for the future: to either leave food "stored" in its natural state (alive), or to harvest, collect, and process it, to guard against potential hunger. Through socially cooperative relationships based on kinship and marriage, humans have always worked to offset the possibility of food shortages, and at the level of individual families and households, people's needs were responsibly met. Whether it was 200,000 years ago or today, the cooperative effort to achieve food security is a facet of human culture. The subsistence practices of hunter-gathering, pastoralism, horticulture, and agriculture, as described in chapter 2, were generally able to provide sufficient food for the local population. Realistically, however, there was some hunger, and famines did occur, resulting in malnutrition; these identify food insecurity. Food insecurity is defined as a lack of food, of which there is a continuum, from chronic to acute, congruent with social inequality and crises. It also encompasses the excess of food, which is a chronic occurrence. The scale of today's global malnutrition—quantifiable evidence of food insecurity—raises worrying questions about food production, distribution, and consumption, especially after nearly 70 years of efforts to feed the world.

The sharing of food, the gastro-politics discussed in chapter 6, operates within the threshold of intimacy, but even here hunger and malnutrition can be found, especially among vulnerable children, women, and the elderly. Gastro-politics extends through many scales, into the wider circumstances of local, regional, national, and transnational social and political organization. At any scale, this is about the social order and concerns the exercise of power and control, played out through food security. Households organize the work of acquiring food, and these operate within broader social norms, all the way up to national and international policies directed toward food production, distribution and consumption; in turn, these intersect with

the global food system of transnational corporations and the bodies of governance: the UN and its agencies. Considering gastro-politics on this scale helps explain the extent of malnutrition, and to look for its causes beyond specific contexts and within the interconnectedness of global food production. We left chapter 3's case studies—India, British Columbia, and Guatemala—with the question of whether changes to subsistence had improved food security. Here we revisit those circumstances, look for answers, and offer some hope for our interconnected but localized food future. The global gastro-politics move from the top-down role of the UN agencies directly involved in food production, dietary and health issues, and emergency aid to the grassroots and from-the-ground-up movements of local farmers, who have had to live through the consequences of the feed-the-world agenda. Both enter the everyday gastro-politics of individuals and families, influencing both the types of food available for consumption and the construction of food's meanings. This overview is concerned with the interconnectedness of global and local food systems, and provides background for the next chapter's exploration of how local meanings are created to domesticate new foods.

FROM THE TOP DOWN: THE GASTRO-POLITICS OF FOOD IN/SECURITY

The United Nations works to establish cooperative relations between member states, to reduce conflict, and to eradicate problems. It operates at the level of international relations and seeks "to make a real and measureable difference in people's lives" (Annan 2000, 6). We can explore the roles of two major UN agencies—the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO)—in relation to global gastro-politics and their influence on the everyday lives of people throughout the world. Whether we recognize it or not, within the flows of the globalscapes, these agencies exert gastro-political influences that affect everyone, everywhere. The FAO has been instrumental in defining food security and has emphasized the importance of boosting food production to feed the world. Its work took industrial, export-oriented, commercialized agriculture to the world's developing countries and helped establish the globalized food industry. The WHO has been tasked with looking after the health issues facing the world—infectious diseases—and alleviating malnutrition through feeding the world with food that meets people's needs for a healthy diet. As an important but simple comparison point between the two agencies: the FAO has directly influenced the quantities of food available, while the WHO is now more interested in the qualities of these foods and their impacts on people's heath. Both deliver powerful forms of control over people's lives: directing livelihoods and subjecting individual bodies to dietary regimens to counter illness. We can track each agency's agenda through major "action plans" and "status updates," published to inform the global community of their work. The following overview of these major position statements provides the background to the specific examples of famine, nutrition transition,

obesity and overweight, and NCDs that are addressed in more detail later in the chapter, and lead into a discussion of the rise of grassroots responses to the problems of food security. The recipients of FAO and WHO initiatives do not passively accept changes; adjustments, resistance, and making sense within existing cultural logic occur everywhere.

FOUR PILLARS OF FOOD SECURITY

In 1943, during World War II, 44 nations, united in their war efforts, came together at a conference in Hot Springs, Virginia, and considered "the world problems of food and agriculture." The delegates declared, "The goal of freedom from want of food, suitable and adequate for health and strength of all peoples, can be achieved" (Phillips 1981, 11). This led to the establishment of the Food and Agriculture Organization in 1945, marking the beginning of the global food security agenda within the United Nations, to be achieved through international cooperation and individual state policies. To feed the world, from the 1940s to 1950s, surpluses from nations such as the United States and Canada were made available to countries in need. From 1950s onward, in order to foster self-sufficiency, agricultural development became key to alleviating hunger, culminating in the Green Revolution to further boost yields (Phillips 1981). In conjunction with the FAO's agricultural work, successive World Food Conferences/Summits have occurred, slowly refining the definition of food security to its current form: "Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life" (Committee on World Food Security [CFS] 2016, 2).

The definition is augmented by its "four pillars of food security": availability, access, stability, and utilization. Each multidimensional pillar can be imagined as supporting food security, and conversely, helping illuminate the complex circumstances that contribute to food insecurity, measured by forms of malnutrition. Food insecurity, as articulated by the FAO, is defined as the opposite of food security: when people do not have adequate physical, social, or economic access to food. Food insecurity arises from issues concerning governance, the environment, the economy and production, and the dynamics of demography and society. Indeed, the actions of the FAO itself have, unwittingly, contributed to food insecurity. The four pillars reveal the shifting emphases of UN policies, adjusted through the decades in response to world events, such as wars, famines, and natural disasters—and to the grim reality of a still hungry world. Each pillar, in this raking light of global realities, is capable of casting long shadows of food insecurity.

The availability pillar supported the ideal of meeting the demand for food to prevent hunger. It began by making the production of food surpluses a vital component of feeding the world. The increased quantities needed were concentrated in major commodity crops: rice,

corn, and wheat, for instance. Environments were transformed, species were augmented and protected, all to accommodate increased production. The Green Revolution held the promise of boosted yields, capable of supporting food production and diverting crops into animal feed and biofuels. The food insecurity shadow of this pillar concerns the decline in food quality: less crop variety, more processing, and longer distances travelled along commodity chains. Environmental degradation from energy- and chemical-intensive agriculture has compromised future productivity, local biodiversity, and ocean health, and has contributed to climate change. Agricultural development in the Global South reinforced the core and periphery status of states, and consolidated the power of the food industry's transnational corporations to grow and feed the world with industrial cuisine. Availability of ample quantities of food was achieved, but the quality of some of the food is now questioned.

The access pillar was emphasized when UN agencies began to navigate the circumstances of recurring famines and food crises and to investigate which members of society suffered the most. Food security hinges on whether all members of society have access to sufficient food in households and communities. Access becomes a social allocation, based on accepted rights or entitlements, part of the gastro-politics between kin, gender, age, and class. These are ideologically informed gastro-politics, based on negotiations, struggles, and strategies occurring in private and public (Sen 1981). The shadow of food insecurity cast by this pillar is concerned with the structural inequalities of society: increased stratification by gender, age, class, and race, all of which need to be countered to fully secure food for everyone. Inclusion in a capitalist, market economy based on wage labour exacerbates inequities and sets limits to access based on income and proximity to food sources. People's access to land and to self-sufficient food production were changed through agricultural industrialization, which jeopardized food security across rural and urban lives.

The emphasis on stability attested to the increased awareness of the interconnectedness of the global system and the volatility of the global financial markets, with related social and political "shocks" that jeopardize food security. Global governance sought to stabilize the economic system through the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, projecting continued economic growth in a free-market system as a solution to political instability. However, some of these measures cast long, global shadows of instability, wreaking havoc on local lives and deepening food insecurity. The failures of national governance, such as prolonged, open conflict, and inadequate social support—health care, education, sanitation, access to natural resources, land, and livelihoods—all impeded people's ability to secure adequate food. Furthermore, the environment is not immune to human interference (with climate change being the biggest example) and excess water consumption and degradation from overuse affect its stability—directly impacting the sustainability of people's access to food, water, and livelihoods.

The utilization pillar built the biological and cultural perspectives of food consumption into food security. With this emphasis, the feed-the-world agenda began to acknowledge that there is more to *feeding* the world than just calories and nutrients. Instead people *eat* across the world—have taste preferences, cooking styles, and rules of commensality. The cement for this food security pillar rests on enabling people to use food that is safe and healthy, capable of meeting energy and nutrient needs, and is socially and culturally satisfying. Hiding in the shadows of this pillar is the gastro-anomie of food insecurity: of having no meaningful foods to eat in times of famine, and too many foods surrounded by too many meanings for people to know how to make wise decisions. Everyone's exposure to the global flows of ideas and new ways of being present new opportunities for fashioning oneself through consumption, and the utilization of traditional and new foods becomes part of local gastro-politics. Here, the readily available, accessible industrial cuisine offers the loudest and tastiest choices—for better or for worse.

FOOD QUANTITY: THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION'S AGENDA AND CHALLENGES

The FAO periodically convenes World Food Summits at which the UN agenda to eradicate world hunger is reiterated on a world stage. These set out new actions to achieve that goal and targets that can be monitored to assess progress. The gathered heads of state of the member nations—often after feasting—publicly endorse the commitment of their respective governments and pledge to work together as a global community. The summits began in 1974, but by 1996 it was acknowledged that hunger was still a growing problem; the prediction was that unless further measures were taken, there would be 680 million hungry people in the world by 2010 (the actual figure was 925 million). After a decade of meetings, the UN Millennial Development Goals 2000–2015 formulated "time-bound" targets to continue to address humanity's pressing problems, such as poverty, hunger, malnutrition and disease, gender inequality, and child mortality, particularly in the developing world. Of the eight goals, the first was to eradicate world hunger and poverty, with a target of halving the proportion of people suffering from hunger by 2015. The nature of hunger is difficult to determine (ranging from physiologic malnutrition to cultural longing for food tastes), and in order to demonstrate its eradication, specific quantifiable measures of biological hunger were established. These indicators are the prevalence of underweight children and the proportion of the population under the minimum calorie intake established by the FAO. By 2002, the World Food Summit began to press forward with establishing the Right to Food Guidelines, which were published in 2005 (Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO] 2005) to enable member states to work toward national food security within its four-pillars approach. These voluntary guidelines

target the operations of state administration that are involved in all aspects of the food system—production, distribution, and consumption—to provide access to all members of society, especially the most vulnerable (FAO 2005). This agenda identifies the eradication of hunger as the meeting of dietary needs *and* cultural food preferences. The guidelines offer a model for building national food policies that look toward food security. Since then, the FAO has published annually updated assessments of agricultural development and food security targets, which provide evidence of the challenges facing the UN community (FAO 2017b, 2017c).

Challenge One: Market Instability

In Guatemala, as discussed in chapter 3, the growing of coffee for export has contributed to food insecurity. The production of this commodity crop is impacted by fluctuating consumer tastes, large harvests, plantation devastation from fungus (coffee rust), and the slow maturation of coffee plants. Consequently, accurately matching the supply of coffee to consumer demand is fraught with uncertainty, and triggers market volatility—price drops and gains. During the 1999–2003 coffee crisis, the market price plunged below production costs, directly jeopardizing the lives of workers on plantations and resulting in starvation (Fischer and Victor 2014, 163; Tucker 2017, 113–18). Within the globalized production of food as commodities to be traded, the instability of financial markets eventually hits the ground, making livelihoods precarious and compromising people's abilities to feed their families. Shifting subsistence farming to the production of commodity crops is risky, especially when prices for them fall, profits plummet, and foods for purchase become unaffordable.

During the lifespan of the Millennial Goals, world events highlighted the need for changing policy direction toward market fluctuations. The stability pillar of food security became more crucial. The 2006–08 Food Crisis pushed an additional 115 million people into hunger, bringing the total of malnourished people across the world to nearly one billion. The news reports about food riots in Egypt, long, desperate queues for basmati rice in India, and pleas for calm from ministers in Thailand captured the world's attention, precipitating international action to try to quell the approaching catastrophe. The crisis saw staple crops such as rice, wheat, corn, and soybeans more than double in price, making consumer goods increasingly unaffordable, which especially affected the poor in developing and developed nations. Food prices and economic instability continued through 2009 and beyond 2012, making food security part of public discourse brought down to the level of the individual household, as grocery bills climbed or access to food was severely compromised. The causes of this crisis are varied and have been much debated, but they can be encapsulated as follows: The rise of oil prices increased the cost of agrochemicals (e.g., fertilizers), and agricultural production shifted away from food into biofuels or animal feed. Financial speculation on food commodities pushed the cost of food ever higher. The increased demand for Westernized processed foods and meat by status-seeking

FIGURE 8.2
Morning Coffee, Panajachel, Guatemala: Is it instant Nescafé or freshly brewed local coffee?

middle classes in countries like Guatemala drove prices higher. Environmental problems such as droughts, soil erosion, and shrinking aquifers all acted to further escalate food costs (Viatte et al. 2009, 2, 14). A recurring issue is the farming subsidies of many Euro-American nations. While these support a nation's farmers, they can encourage overproduction, which floods the market, causes the price to crash, and severely impacts smaller farmers in developing nations. In light of these inequities, the FAO and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have pushed for the implementation of safety nets to provide food to those in need, such as women and children, and to increase agricultural efficiency. This is the same attitude that launched the Green Revolution, promoted in the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) report "How to Feed the World in 2050" (2009), which emphasized the business of the food system, such as investment in "marketing infrastructure," the development of credit and finance schemes, and capacity building. Through public and private investment, developing nations were projected to become the major suppliers of food distributed to the world's urban centres, where it was estimated that 70 per cent of the world's entire population would be living by 2050 (Viatte et al. 2009, 15–18; FAO 2009, 12, 20–22). In many ways, this reflected a business-as-usual agenda, but the very real threat of climate change would later reset this approach.

Challenge Two: Famine

In early 2017, the UN's World Food Programme (WFP) declared a famine in South Sudan, the first "official" famine since 2011, identifying nearly five million people—nearly 40 per cent of the population—as in urgent need of food, agriculture, and nutrition assistance (WFP 2017). The WFP is the world's largest humanitarian agency, mandated to provide emergency relief in times of crisis. South Sudan's civil war is directly responsible for the famine, having displaced people from their lands and destroyed livelihoods. There have been significant efforts to broker peace accords; to bring emergency food supplies, particularly for children, pregnant women, and nursing mothers; and to establish refugee camps offering safety, water, and medicines. The civil war was triggered after Sudan's independence, which unleashed a power struggle to gain control over oil production. The war is also an ethnic conflict, pitting the Nuer and Dinka against one another, exacerbating long-term rivalries.

Amartya Sen's work on famine (1981) is acknowledged as shifting attention away from natural disasters, such as drought, as the cause of famine and concentrating instead on the social, political, and economic circumstances that disrupt people's livelihood. His economics background is evident, but his focus on the micro-level, household responses to food shortages offers a more ethnographic, qualitative, and human understanding of the events that lead up to famines. As explored in chapter 2, members of households gain access to food through cooperative social relations with kin through the domestic division of labour, subsistence work, hunting, gathering, gardening, herding, and wage labour, and sharing the acquired resources. The wider ecological and sociological environments will provide opportunities and limits, depending upon the level of control and power exercised by individuals and social groups. If limits are placed upon availability and access to food, people draw upon coping strategies: seeking support through kinship networks, using stored foods and seeds, eating foods of last resort, rationing food, selling property, and, when faced with no other option, fleeing to refugee camps. Famine, it is now recognized, does not affect people equally; some will starve and some will have plenty. In South Sudan, it was not the failure of local subsistence but the violence of civil war that pushed food insecurity to an extreme. An FAO representative in South Sudan commented, "The people are predominantly farmers and war has disrupted agriculture. They've lost their livestock, even their farming tools. For months there has been a total reliance on plants of whatever kind they can find, and fish they can catch" (WFP 2017). These are mainly Nuer tribespeople, for whom fish are classed as a famine food—to be eaten during the "hungry times." The crisis for the Nuer has pushed them beyond the usual coping strategies and into migration to find security—from bloodshed, and for food.

Global monitoring of potential famine has become part of the international community's response, and has led to the development of a standardized assessment, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) (IPC 2017). This is a multi-agency initiative that includes

UN organizations and others, such as Oxfam, USAID, CARE International, and the European Union. Its work involves grassroots data gathering, as has occurred in South Sudan, through levels of government, to the international arena to trigger emergency relief, but more importantly to try to stop the escalation of food insecurity to famine. Once famine is declared, emergency aid becomes the priority, but it is beset with problems such as costly overheads, middlemen, and spoilage; insufficient infrastructure—that is, roads and transportation to get food to those who need it; and corruption, which can divert food elsewhere. Cash transfers have become a successful alternative, giving households much-needed cash to support less risky coping strategies, such as buying food for storage, replenishing seed reserves, feeding animals, and stimulating the local economy (Daidone et al. 2017). This works with people's local knowledge and ingenuity, shoring up support networks to prevent displacements. Violent conflicts, however, can make this solution impossible. In South Sudan, prior to 2017, the FAO provided emergency livelihood kits to 2.3 million people to help them fish and plant vegetables, and vaccinated six million sheep and cattle to prevent the spread of diseases. At the emergency camps, cash-based transfers are distributed to refugees to buy food, which is available from local traders (WFP 2017).

Famine represents the extreme failure of food security requirements: successful food production and distribution to ensure availability of food; and societal stability to guarantee access to, and consequently consumption of, nutritious and safe food. The FAO long-term strategies are directed toward food production and distribution, to make sure that there is enough food now, and that there will be in the future, after population growth. This will be returned to later in this chapter.

Challenge Three: Climate Change

In 1992, at the UN's Earth Summit, a concerted global response to climate change began with the Framework Convention on Climate Change. This led to the Kyoto Protocol in 1995, which laid out means to mitigate against climate change and address the issue of how vulnerable communities could adapt to the environmental changes of global warming, such as rising sea levels, droughts, and the spread of pests and diseases. The acknowledgment in 2013 that climate change was an anthropogenic phenomenon took UN policy-making in a new sustainable direction. Sustainability took on a new reality: since human activity had compromised our future existence, it needed to change. Humans' involvement in climate change—by increasing the concentration of greenhouse gases (GHGs) through industrialization, fossil fuel consumption, deforestation, and some farming techniques—had accelerated the effects. The global food system was directly implicated, and the FAO's original agenda of industrialized agriculture would further climate change. The promise to feed the world through increased yields had been successful, but the costs to the environment, and the social inequity of access, had compromised this "success" (FAO 2017a, 29). The FAO's Green Revolution needed to acquire

a new green lustre, a shift in degrees—a radical 180° turnaround—to try to achieve the 1.5°C temperature-change target of the Paris Agreement.

RESETTING THE FAO AGENDA: SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

In 2015 the UN assessed the successes and shortfalls of the Millennial Goals, and moved into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), looking toward 2030 and explicitly redirected by the impact of climate change. The first goal is "no poverty," to address the extreme poverty in which 700 million people live; and the second is "zero hunger," to deal with the hunger experienced by nearly 800 million people. These goals are linked through the need to provide livelihoods, and access to food, with food and agriculture presented as key to a solution. A target of Goal 2 is "better use of agricultural biodiversity … [to] contribute to more nutritious diets, enhanced livelihoods for farming communities and more resilient and sustainable farming systems" (United Nations [UN] 2017). The SDGs are part of the UN's responses to climate change, and for the Food and Agriculture Organization, this has necessitated a revisioning of how agriculture can support food security. Two FAO publications—"The State of Food and Agriculture: Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security" (2016b), together with "The Future of Food Agriculture: Trends and Challenges" (2017a)—track the reversal of many previous initiatives to feed the world. Sustainable development and support for small-scale farmers has become the urgent agenda of the FAO, rather than the promotion of intensive, industrialized, technocentric agriculture, which supports the food industry. Instead, an ecocentric, agroecological farming approach will be pursued to enable small farming communities to adapt to climate change, be resilient, protect the environment, reduce poverty, and be food secure. The failures of industrial agriculture (as witnessed by India, British Columbia, and Guatemala)—environmental degradation, food insecurity, nutritional deficiencies, and social inequity—are acknowledged, and a new agenda for sustainability promised. The FAO launched an action plan to target "rural development and investment in agriculture—crops, livestock, fisheries, and aquaculture" and to "propagate a society-wide movement, leading to national policy change and ultimately to the end of all forms of malnutrition" (FAO 2015, 6; 2016b, 2). These FAO agricultural initiatives must be twinned with the WHO action on nutrition, to bring global gastro-politics down into the lives of ordinary people.

FOOD QUALITY: THE WHO'S AGENDA AND CHALLENGES

The World Health Organization was founded in 1946, and today employs 7,000 people in 150 countries as the global authority to direct and coordinate research, policy, monitoring, and support on international health. Its objective is "the attainment by all peoples of the highest

FIGURE 8.3
TV Dinner: A convenience food marketed to match a generation's leisure activities. Changing lifestyles demand new food products: Which ones serve your lifestyle needs?

possible level of health," with "health" defined as "a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" (WHO [1946] 2006). From the perspective of the WHO (2008, 2010, 2013, 2014d), the issue of food security has a direct bearing on what we eat—its quality—and the current eating habits that are jeopardizing people's health. The WHO initiatives address questions around people's consumption of sufficient, adequate food, for nutrient and energy needs. Eating is this agency's focus, and directed by medical and nutritional knowledge, it delivers advice and health-care support to enable individuals to make informed choices and access services. Changing diets—nutrition transitions, as discussed in chapter 3—can mark the beginnings of food security, but the quality of the food will have a profound effect on people's health. Industrial cuisine, processed and packaged foods, and fast foods have been identified as compromising health. Furthermore, the global epidemic of obesity and the spread of NCDs lend credence to the UN's labelling of them as an issue of food insecurity.

Challenge One: Overweight and Obesity

Many indigenous peoples across the world—such as the Inuit and First Nations in Canada, Native Americans, Hawaiians, and Aboriginal Australians—have suffered the consequences of

drastically changed diets in a relatively short time period. This was not a voluntary switch to a new diet; instead, the dietary transformations represented the convergence of much wider economic, political, and social forces, especially colonialism. Contact brought pressure to abandon traditional lifeways, settle down, and participate in the new settler economy, such as a fur trapping or wage labour. This made new foods, such as white flour and sugar, available; led to increased fat intake; encouraged the consumption of soft, easily digested, processed foods; and increased alcohol intake (Lieberman 2000, 1066). Initially, these foods would have been given meaning within existing food classifications and rules. For instance, the Oglala, Native Americans, carefully observed the new substances' similarities and qualities as compared to traditional foods, and then assigned meaning: coffee was like a herbal brew and fit into the medicinal drink category; sugar was sweetness and aligned with maple sap; beef and other meats equated with bison; and bread (fry-bread) was placed in the group of foods made with grease. Once located within these meanings and assigned value, the new foods could be consumed at social events, following traditional rules, as markers of Oglala identity (Powers and Powers [1973] 2003, 81–82, 90). Local meanings help make sense of food, but some foods were qualitatively different at a nutritional level, for example, Oglala fry-bread made with refined flour, which compromise the body's metabolic responses, giving rise to extraordinarily high rates of obesity and diabetes.

Obesity, a medical term, is defined as having a body mass index (BMI) greater than 30. (To calculate BMI, multiply your weight in kilograms by the square of your height in metres). Overweight is defined as having a BMI over 25. In 2014, more than 1.9 billion adults worldwide were overweight, including 600 million obese people (World Health Organization 2016). This is a global phenomenon, and it has global causes. The statistics reveal the extent of the global reshaping of bodies, and the changing meanings ascribed to people's physique. Some cultures used to prize fatness, as in Fiji, where fatness—or in Fijian, *jubu vina*, robustness—was valued, and the body, male or female, was not seen as an expression of the individual self but rather as evidence that your kin provided enough food and cared for you. Indeed, meals included entreaties to "eat, so you will become fat," making body size a symbol of cohesive social support (Becker 2004, 538). In small-scale horticultural societies, the ability to produce enough surpluses for people to be consistently robust communicated successful management of the food supply. Physical activity was a given, and robustness did not come at the expense of fitness. Fatness symbolized food security, conferred social standing, and was not attainable by everyone. By 2002, however, Fijian young women had begun to diet to attain thinness, going against the long-held positive attitude toward fatness and asserting their individualism through weight loss. Caused by an **obesogenic environment** taking root, the trend toward weight loss undermined the strength of the local cultural values of fatness. This entailed a wage-labour economy replacing subsistence agriculture, electricity and cars replacing physical activity, televisions and consumer goods proliferating, and the media helping to direct consumers' overconsumption of store-bought processed food (Brown and Sweeney 2009, 7).

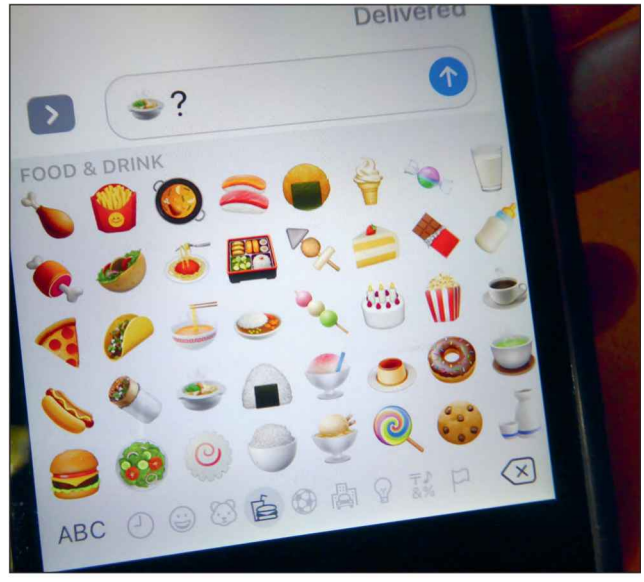


FIGURE 8.4
Global Food Emojiis: Global communication demands globally recognized symbols.

Weight gain became attributed to a lack of effort, rather than a symbol of social competency. Fatness was recast as obesity—a medical problem, its health risks made apparent—and young girls dieted to emulate thin television stars and get better jobs (Becker 2004, 539).

The issue of whether being obese or overweight has deeper connections to the genetic heredity of humans is important—but it cannot explain why some populations suffer from higher levels of obesity than others. Our capacity to gain weight is part of our evolutionary legacy, a genetic survival mechanism that allowed people to store fat during times of plenty, as reserves for lean times. This capacity, it has been argued, was encoded in "the thrifty gene"; it is now recognized that multiple genes trigger physiological responses, and it is the environment that acts to switch combinations on or off. However, as food became more plentiful—not necessarily of better quality—weight gain has become a disadvantage, especially when combined with decreasing physical activity. The current industrial food environment makes it cheap and easy to gain weight, but expensive and hard to lose weight. Furthermore, it is argued that poverty affects the nutrition of pregnant women, triggering fat metabolism changes in the unborn child that will predispose them to obesity as adults (Brewis 2012, 464–65; Ulijaszek, Mann, and Elton 2012, 304–08). Ultimately it must be remembered that obesity is influenced by many things, including genetic heredity, lack of income and opportunity to buy better foods, fewer educational opportunities, and the emphasis upon driving, sedentary work practices, and the

FRESH CHICKEN
POULET FRAIS
Raised without antibiotics
Fed no animal by-products
100% Canadian
Élevé sans antibiotiques
Nourri sans
sous-produits animaux
100 % canadien
CERTIFIED HUMANE
RAISED & HANDLED
*Meets the Humane Farm Animal Care Program standards, which include nutritious diet without antibiotics, animals raised with shelter, resting areas, sufficient space and the ability to engage in natural behaviors.
*Respecte les normes du Humane Farm Animal Care Program, lesquelles exigent d'offrir aux animaux d'élevage une alimentation nutritive sans antibiotiques, un refuge, des aires de repos et un espace suffisant pour leur permettre d'adopter des comportements naturels.
Raised by a CANADIAN FARMER
Élevé par un PRODUCTEUR CANADIEN
SAFE HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE OF LABEL
DIRECTIVES POUR UNE MANIPULATION SÉCURITAIRE AU DOS DE L'ÉTIQUETTE
CANADA
of lowest pri

FIGURE 8.5
Packaged Chicken: Supermarket chicken is distanced from its animal origins, but does this absolve us of ethical responsibilities?

greater use of labour-saving technology, all of which allow obesity to quietly take hold. These consequences lie beyond the control of the individuals whose lives they affect. While there are populations—such as indigenous peoples—who appear to suffer obesity rates that are higher than others, these cannot be mapped genetically; instead, what links concentrations of obesity are shared circumstances: the place, changing diet and activity levels, and poverty. Poverty limits access to healthy foods, and often the market acts to make cheap, unhealthy foods more readily available in locations with less spending power. Within these circumstances, the emergence of obesity can be understood as not just a biologically based health problem, but also a significant social problem that needs to be addressed through many levels of government, as part of global gastro-politics.

Challenge Two: Non-communicable Diseases

Obesity can be a warning sign of NCDs: cardiovascular diseases, such as heart attacks and strokes; cancers; chronic respiratory diseases, such as asthma; or diabetes. All are long-duration illnesses, often with a slow progression of exhibited symptoms. However, in order to trigger early interventions, specific medical assessments of the symptoms—such as raised blood pressure, increased blood glucose, or elevated lipids—are needed. Without adequate health care, many people are unaware that they are suffering from NCDs and are unlikely to seek help to

BOX 8.1:
PONDERING MEAT: A GROWING CONCERN

Consider a package of meat, its bodily origins obscured, scaled and named for cooking rather than natural history. To eat meat means that animals are hunted or reared, and then killed to provide sustenance. The quality of life they experience, and how they are killed are, for many people, important considerations in their choice to consume animal products—or not. The more removed people have become from the living sources of their meat, the easier it has become to forget the living, breathing, feeling animals. Humans have relied upon animal species for millennia, and meat is accorded a prestigious position in many societies; this is often understood as the power of culture over nature, with consideration given to the seriousness of taking a life to give life (Fiddes 1992, 3). But the dominant meanings of meat are open to dispute, which gives it differing values within the same society. It can be embraced and enjoyed, or rejected and reviled. This is an issue worth pondering.

Personal choices to consume meat will be influenced by upbringing, ethnicity, convenience, and taste preferences, but it is also a choice that has become increasingly uncomfortable for some, based on such factors as morals, health, cost, and fear of food-borne illness. As a source of energy and nutrients, meat does offer a choice that can solve the omnivore's dilemma, but it is not mandated that humans have to eat meat. Our evolutionary history has patterned that our energy and nutrient needs can be acquired from a variety of sources, not from a diet of specific foods.

Overall, meat consumption has increased in Western societies since World War II, and globally, meat consumption is expected to rise (Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO] 2009, 6–7, 11). The association of meat eating with success, wealth, and a Western lifestyle has added to its perceived value in many developing countries. Chicken, a globally preferred meat, is cheap to produce, surrounded by few food prohibitions, and easily accommodated as fast food or within local culinary traditions. Chicken production, paralleling that of other meats, has become industrialized, concentrated, and reliant upon growth hormones and antibiotics to guarantee supplies. In response to the global rise of meat consumption, the FAO (2016b, 19) has called for its reduction, in order to ameliorate the health problems it causes as well as the environmental ones; intensive, industrialized meat production is highly energy dependent, uses huge amounts of water, and affects land use, biodiversity, and climate change.

continues . . .

box 8.1 continued…

Industrialized production has seen some enforcement of food safety measures to control meat handling, but the welfare of the living animals is put in jeopardy. Animals do suffer when deprived of basic necessities and subjected to inhumane treatment. In Canada and elsewhere, this has come under close scrutiny due to grassroots activists publicizing cruelty against animals. The World Animal Protection Society, for instance, has called for a strengthened code of practice for poultry farmers, to alleviate chickens' suffering; the recommendations include allowing increased darkness for sleep, phasing out de-beaking, ensuring daily feeding, and providing more space (WAPS 2016). Food writers have argued for the rights of animals to live a life that befits the needs of the species: a pig life, a chicken life, for instance, with all that such a life entails (Pollan 2007). In many North American cities, backyard urban chicken rearing has made visible, once again, our relationship with food-producing species and personalized the act of slaughtering animals (British Columbia Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals [BCSPCA] 2012).

When huge numbers of animals are slaughtered, what happens behind the walls of the abattoirs can erode ethical and hygiene practices (Chemnitz and Becheva 2014). In 2011, 58 trillion chickens were slaughtered worldwide, and Canada's portion was 30 kg of chicken meat per person (WAPS 2016; Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada [AAFC] 2016). This scale of chicken consumption has industrialized the lives and deaths of the birds, leading to instances of brutal processing, often documented by undercover animal rights activisits (W5 2015). Consequently, animal welfare organizations work to help consumers make ethical choices, which include the purchase of chickens that are certified organic, humane certified, free-range, or free run. However, this advice concerns the lives of the chickens, not their deaths—but this is qualified by noting that the most humane option is to not eat animals (Canadian Coalition for Farm Animals [CCFA] 2016).

try to stop the diseases' progression. The World Health Organization reports that, worldwide, these diseases now kill 38 million people annually and account for 68 per cent of global deaths (WHO 2014c). Once thought to be the diseases of affluent classes and states, these are now striking with the greatest rapidity in developing countries, where they claim 28 million lives a year (WHO 2015c). In Canada, for instance, NCDs accounted for 88 per cent of all deaths in 2014, while in Guatemala, a less affluent country, it was 47 per cent—surpassing communicable, perinatal, and nutritional conditions (WHO 2014a, 2014b.). No age groups, classes, genders,

or regions are immune, and often the most vulnerable—the young, the poor, women, and the uneducated—are the most susceptible. It is estimated that this will continue unless significant changes are made to our dietary choices.

Although these diseases are called "non-communicable," differentiating them from infectious diseases passed on by contact between individuals, there are agents of contagion that have unleashed their epidemic-like spread. This is made evident by the shared risk factors—"tobacco use, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and the harmful use of alcohol"—all of which are "accelerated by the negative effects of globalization, rapid unplanned urbanization and increasingly sedentary lives" (WHO 2010, 2). While individuals may be alone in their suffering, they are united in the societal causes of NCDs. The agents of contagion are found in the global flows of commodities, ideas, technology, money, and people, all of which are interconnected in the current economic and political system and its ensuing societal model. The NCDs are directly related to people who are "increasingly eating foods with higher levels of total energy and are being targeted by marketing for tobacco, alcohol and junk food, while availability of these products increases" (WHO 2008, 5; WHO 2010, 2). It is the quality and quantity of the food that makes it unhealthy. The diet is explicitly identified as containing processed and refined foods with fat, sugar, and salt; with increased consumption of saturated and trans fats through eating more meat and dairy, and reduced consumption of fruit and vegetables. It involves a dozen species of animals providing 90 per cent of the animal protein consumed, and four crop species—wheat, maize, rice, and soy—providing half of the plant-based calories (FAO 2009, 10). The FAO predicts that annual per capita meat consumption will increase from 41 kg to 52 kg in developed states, and from 30 kg to 44 kg in developing countries (FAO 2009, 6–7, 11). See **Box 8.1**, Pondering Meat. It is thought that the "demand for semi-processed and ready-to-eat foods" (FAO 2009, 6) suited to the needs of urban working life will continue, bringing a consolidation of global supermarket chains. In Thailand, for instance, 85 per cent of the population now have access to supermarkets, and obesity rates are climbing; 71 per cent of deaths are due to NCDs. The foods of industrial cuisine are processed, packaged, and sold in convenience stores, shops, and supermarkets around the world; it is particularly people in urban centres, where this food is cheap and convenient, who are buying the most industrial cuisine and exhibiting higher rates of NCDs (Hawkes, Harris, and Gillespie 2017, WHO 2014c). Some types of food have been identified as particularly contributing to unhealthy, urban eating: sugary drinks, snack foods, processed meats, Western-style bakery goods, instant foods, and deep-fried foods, with fast food outlets deeply implicated (Hawkes, Harris, and Gillespie 2017, 38). All of these are heavily advertised and come with an added cachet of **cosmopolitanism**. In many developing societies, these new foods are purchased by the elite, who slowly get fatter but, becoming more aware of the stigma of fat in the new global social order, quickly revert to thinness as a marker of their social status. In the meantime, as prices fall, the working class can buy the new foods, become fatter, and be stigmatized as inferior (Lieberman 2000, 1067; Brewis et al. 2011).

RESETTING THE WHO AGENDA: HEALTHY DIET

In light of the evidence of the global extent of overweight and obesity, and the epidemic of NCDs, the World Health Organization formulated an Action Plan for the Global Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases, beginning in 2008 and renewed onward to 2020 (WHO 2008, 2013). This works within the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and addresses the nutritional legacy of industrial agriculture spearheaded by the earlier work of the Food and Agriculture Organization. The old agenda to feed the world through quantities of industrialized foodstuffs calculated success based on the calories available, rather than the quality of the food: the range of nutrients needed for a healthy diet (FAO 2017a, 29). The WHO provides important, publicly accessible "key facts" for a "healthy diet" (WHO 2015d). Here, the nutritional background for its Action Plan can be found. The healthy diet is presented as a contrast to the unhealthy diet, based on consuming calories to balance energy needs, fewer fats (especially saturated fats), less meat, fewer processed foods, less sugar and salt/sodium, and more fruits and vegetables, including whole grains. An important point, locating the healthy diet in human omnivory and global cuisines, is emphasized: "The exact make-up of a diversified, balanced and healthy diet will vary depending on individual needs, cultural context, locally available foods and dietary customs." There is no single human diet, as defined by specific foods, but there are basic principles for eating healthily. The challenges facing the WHO are how to translate the basic nutritional principles into meaningful dietary advice that crosses cultural borders—working within the pressures of urbanized, industrial life—and furthermore, how to bridge the social inequities that prevent many from accessing healthy food.

To correct the damage of this unhealthy diet, the WHO looks for leadership at the level of national governments, and well-known celebrities. The governmental initiatives include national food policies, prevention through nutritional education and physical exercise campaigns, health care through universal provision of diagnosis and treatment, and monitoring to determine successful outcomes. Within this agenda, the gastro-politics of healthy eating are played out through the state's responsibilities toward its citizens, balancing their interests against the powerful food industry sector. The plan is based upon a state's voluntary implementation of the recommended measures, usually sold as solutions to skyrocketing health-care costs. For instance, it is estimated that between 2011 and 2025, NCDs will cost US$7 trillion in cumulative economic losses in developing countries, considerably more than the US$11 billion costs of the recommended initiatives (WHO 2014c, xi). On the individual level, particularly economical interventions to halt NCDs focus on specific substances, urging people to reduce their sugar and salt/sodium intakes, and to replace trans fats with unsaturated fats; on a national level, countries are encouraged to implement public awareness programs on diet, physical exercise, and breastfeeding (WHO 2014c). At the level of high-profile celebrities, chefs, food commentators, and former politicians have all been enlisted to promote healthy

FIGURE 8.6
Bimbo Bread for Guatemala: A quintessential supermarket bread brand of Central America, marketed to Guatemalans by appealing to local Mayan culture.

eating. If any of the WHO dietary and behavioural recommendations sound familiar, it is evidence of the success of these celebrity voices, and the willingness of some national governments to move toward promoting better health in their populations. With very little real power to direct government policy, or to force the food industry to change its highly profitable production, distribution, and retail of industrial cuisine, the WHO strategy rests on educating, warning, and providing multiple opportunities for individuals to embrace a healthy diet and avoid industrial cuisine to prevent being infected by NCDs.

FROM THE GROUND UP: GRASSROOTS ACTIVISM

Far away from the rarefied actions of UN agencies, other forces of change have been at work, often as a direct response to the economic, political, and social injustices of colonialism, capitalism, and globalization. It can be argued that the only reason the UN initiatives are gaining traction is because of committed activists who have stood together to resist, change, and work toward more equitable alternative food systems. At the grassroots level of food activism, it has been when the voices of consumers and environmentalists cry out in protest that the

gastro-political agenda has begun to shift. Dissent lurks everywhere in the globalized system, with activists drawn from all ethnicities and social groups working for something better than the circumstances that globalized industrial agriculture has brought.

Indigenous Rights: Decolonizing Diets

To return to indigenous peoples and the consequences of the nutrition transition they experienced as part of colonialism, we can begin to address people's responses to dietary change and ill health. Here, global gastro-politics are part of the struggle for indigenous rights, such as in Canada. Indigenous peoples represent only 4.3 per cent of Canada's population yet are three times more likely to be food insecure than other Canadians, of whom 4 million experience daily hunger. Diabetes among the indigenous population is regarded as having reached epidemic proportions—four times the rate of the non-indigenous population—and 41 per cent of off-reserve youth and children are obese or overweight, compared to 26 per cent of other Canadians (Earle 2011, 3). Efforts to intervene in these circumstances have been successful, among, for instance, the 'Namgis First Nation in British Columbia, who followed a traditional-style diet, using mainly purchased foods to effect a reversal of the nutrition transition and alleviate some of the resultant symptoms, in particular obesity and diabetes. This intervention had some success, but was criticized for relying on industrial cuisine products (Wortman 2008). This study was inspired by Kerin O'Dea's (1984) work with Aboriginal Australians. She took several overweight and diabetic Western Desert Aboriginal people back to their traditional territory for a seven-week return to hunting and gathering. Luckily, they still knew how to find food and live off the wild resources they could acquire. The Australians lost weight and their diabetes greatly improved or normalized (Pollan 2008, 85–89). Other successful examples include the Waianae diet in Hawaii in the late 1980s, and Gary Nabhan's 350-kilometre pilgrimage through the Sonoran Desert with Pima, Papago, and Seri Native Americans in 1999 (Nabhan 2006, 184–210). Significantly, all of these cases showed that it was possible to return to a diet that had recently changed, and that it was the type of foods that are eaten—the quality of the food, not necessarily the quantity—that had an effect. As a consequence, many indigenous groups are calling for the "decolonization" of diets, bringing (where and when possible) a return to eating traditional foods in a culturally specific manner (Mihesuah 2003; McPhail, Beagan, and Chapman 2012, 485; Kuhnlein et al. 2013). In 2012, the UN special rapporteur on the right to food, Olivier de Schutter, visited Canada to examine indigenous food security. Following the Right to Food Guidelines (Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO] 2005), he recommended that Canada create a national food policy that would address indigenous issues, work with provincial and municipal levels of government to protect all citizens' right to food, improve food security, promote healthy diets, and coordinate the nation's food industry (de Schutter 2010, 2012). For indigenous peoples in Canada and

elsewhere, food security has become part of land claims, and asserting sovereignty over all that this entails, including the right to eat healthy, traditional foods.

Angry Farmers: Food Sovereignty and Agroecology

Food sovereignty asserts the importance in of protecting local food sources, knowledge, livelihoods, culinary traditions, and the environment. It is an assertion of control and ownership over the territorial production of food, a call for independent action to bring local food security. The term was coined in 1996 by La Via Campesina—"the peasant way"—a movement of 200 million small-scale farmers, fishers, pastoralists, and indigenous peoples from 81 countries around the world, which lobbies for the recognition of rights to land, livelihoods, and sustainable practices to support local communities. The organization argues that food security, as articulated by the UN, is based solely on economics: availability and access to food at the global "feed the world" level, which has compromised many people's ability to feed the local community. Rather than focusing on producing commodity crops for sale in the volatile global market, food sovereignty is concerned with control over local, sustainable growing of culturally defined foods to bring food security, rebuild local markets, and only then look to more distant, global markets. The organization is recognized as an important contributor to UN policy-making, works with the FAO, and lobbies national governments to bring land and agricultural reform to benefit their local societies. At the UN, at the time of writing, a Universal Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other Peoples Working in Rural Areas is being drafted; it will enshrine the rights of local food producers—not the corporate sector—to use and manage lands, territories, water, seeds, livestock, and biodiversity (UN Human Rights Council [UNHRC] 2017). La Via Campesina argues that food sovereignty is the most powerful response to the current food, poverty, and climate crisis, and has commited to protecting the rights and territories of the "99 per cent of humanity" (La Via Campesina 2017).

In industrialized Western societies, food sovereignty is also a clarion cry for grassroots coalitions of food producers to call for national food policies, whereby state governments unify ministries—in areas such as agriculture, health and nutrition, food safety, trade and industry, and the environment—into a coordinated agenda for ensuring food-related health, jobs, and protection of the environment (Bittman, de Schutter, and Salvador 2016). These are explicit public calls for a food system that can lead to food security and a shift to agroecological farming. In post-Brexit Britain, for instance, as the county disentangles itself from the European Union, the debate over food sovereignty and a unified national food policy has become a serious issue, given that the country imports 29 per cent of its food from the EU. The public's expectation of cheap food, unfortunately, works against the sustainable agroecological agenda, opening the door to internationally owned "megafarms" to intensify production. Public commentators are calling upon the government to create a food policy to address the

currently 4,000 EU regulations related to food, warning that prices will rise, and shortages and safety issues will become a fact of life for British consumers (Lang 2016; Lang, Millstone, and Marsden 2017, 3–4). Each proposed national food policy draws on local discourses, which share concern over many pressing issues:the inequity of the provision of food, the export of local products and the import of global foods, the decline of small agricultural producers, the rise in big corporate agriculture, the rise of concentrated animal feeding operations, the use of genetically modified organisms, the damage to biodiversity, decreasing soil fertility, water shortages, the hazards of pesticides and herbicides, the contamination of food products, food-related ill health, and the effects of climate change. This can be a depressing and debilitating discourse, but it has spawned a remarkable shift in attitude for many people; one that looks to the local, giving rise to significant grassroots activism, as in France.

In France, grassroots activism has made the greatest inroads, through addressing how specific foods, such as fast foods and genetically modified foods, have undermined French cuisine and jeopardized the food security of the nation. France, as previously discussed, claims gastronomy, the family celebratory feast, the modern restaurant tradition, and its haute cuisine as its gifts to the culinary world (Ferguson 2004). Since the nineteenth century, with the work of gourmands and legions of chefs, the *patrimoine culinaire* has become a significant cultural marker of French national identity. The French government, through its ministry of culture, has worked hard to give the cuisine a firm place in the nation's imagination (Trubek 2000; Ferguson 2004; Warde 2009a, 237). "Gastro-nationalism" is the term used to describe the public expression of a nation's identity through its cuisine. This would suggest that France's cuisine is secure in the minds of its citizens; however, France is also the world's second-largest consumer of McDonald's foods (Visseyrias 2011). The early 1970s saw the first French McDonald's open, and today there are over 1,400 outlets, indicating that fast food is well established (McDonald's Europe 2017). Why the French got their teeth into McDonald's is examined in the next chapter. France's obesity rate of 18 per cent of the population is not as high as the UK's 26 per cent, but the country has a comparably high death rate from NCDs: 87 per cent. As elsewhere, the cause is located in industrial cuisine, with McDonald's fast food singled out in particular as the most un-French food culprit (Spencer Freeze 2002, 94; Rosenthal 2005).

Fast food has come to epitomize industrial cuisine; mass quantities of standardized, processed, cheap edibles. Some commentators have located its popularity in the qualities of its tastes, and the human liking for fat, meat, and sweetness derived from our omnivorous ancestral origins. This suggests that, in evolutionary terms, this culinary development was inevitable (Pollan 2007). The social qualities of this style of food—it is fast, individualized, and portable—allows its acquisition and consumption to be fitted into the modern work schedule, with its commuting and short breaks, enabling consumers to "grab a bite" on the run. Fast food fits the "time poverty" experienced in capitalist society, and its availability and accessibility makes

FIGURE 8.7
Burgers and Fries: Simple, predictable, cheap, and familiar-tasting food, suited to the demands of busy urban lives.

it a staple of food security, especially for the poor. The cheapness of its ingredients, sourced from intensive farming, often compromises its nutritional value but makes it affordable to many. Here, the food's meanings—tasty, quick, predictable—lend it social value and give it a place in people's eating practices. But alternative meanings abound: fast food erodes culinary skills, commodifies local cuisines, cheapens labour, inflicts cruelty on animal species, compromises the environment, and damages health. Thus, fast food has been a catalyst in inciting gastro-activism—a localized gastro-political response to the power of the global food industry.

In 1999, José Bové, a French sheep farmer, began a campaign against *la malbouffe*, or bad fast food, taking aim at not only the food but also, implicitly, the industrial agricultural production that provides its ingredients. As a non-artisanal producer, McDonald's was targeted in general because it represented American agro-business interests in France, and more specifically because of a trade war with the United States. With the help of 300 protestors, Bové used his tractor to dismantle a McDonald's in a small French town. Images of his assault on the Golden Arches flowed across the global mediascape, making him a household name, a cultural hero (Heller 2007, 612). The attack on McDonald's was couched in terms of its assault on the French way of life, and especially its small food producers and local food traditions. Bové's celebrity, and public appeal, spurred the French government's initiative to claim the French

gastronomic meal as intangible cultural heritage through UNESCO, as discussed in chapter 6. McDonald's, however, was scapegoated, presented as the cause of gastro-nationalists' indigestion. But it was not the only cause: the French food system itself had industrialized, causing small farmers to lose their livelihoods, and the distribution and retail sectors had become centralized, allowing hypermarkets to sell cheap, mass-produced foods; these factors also threatened local food traditions and sellers (Heller 2007, 604–5). Furthermore, the Europe-wide bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE, or "mad cow disease") scare and other food risks launched heated public debate about food quality, risks, and how to ascertain the safety of food, with GMOs featuring prominently.

Genetically modified organisms (GMOs)—from tomatoes to cereal crops, from Atlantic salmon species to papayas—have provoked considerable public anxiety concerning as to whether they are safe for human consumption. They are seen by some as morally unacceptable due to the "unnatural" intermingling of different species, and ethically unacceptable due to restrictive business practices and the patenting of living species. According to agribusiness, arguing the other side, genetic modification is just another stage in the selective breeding of organisms that began with domestication over 10,000 years ago—a claim to normalize the practice. From the perspective of small-scale farmers, GMOs represent agricultural corporations, such as Monsanto, which have monopolized seeds, chemical products, and production, boosting corporate profits but degrading the environment (Heller 2007, 611). These meanings, amplified by the media, have become direct gastro-political challenges to the availability of genetically modified (GM) foods, and are a public expression of food security concerns at the level of utilization. Consequently, the issue of labelling GM foods has become a prominent subject of debate, with consumers wishing to have the right to be fully informed about what they choose to eat (Nestle 2007, 57–60). The classificatory ambiguity of GMOs has made them the subject of significant controversy; these foods do not fit neatly into single food categories, which makes them troubling, dangerous, and ripe for taboo (Douglas [1966] 2000). In comparison to fast food—which fits into the demands of life—GMOs confuse the categories through which life is made meaningful. From the perspective of agribusiness and the food industry, there appears to be reticence around labelling food that is genetically modified, because doing so identifies the food as somehow different (Health Canada 2005). Noting difference, it seems, from the industry perspective, should be left to the beholder: If it looks the same as other foods, why draw attention to its origins?

As mentioned, in 2016–17, the Food and Agriculture Organization realigned its feed-the-world agenda within the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. The acknowledgment of industrial agriculture as a major contributor to greenhouse gases (GHGs) forced the new, sustainable methods of agroecology to be embraced. The FAO is shifting to feeding the world one locality at a time, with local farmers supported through investments in some mechanization, access to land tenure, subsidies during the transition to diversified production and improved yields,

and the sharing of knowledge (Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO] 2016b, 5). This current paradigm shift represents a meeting of the failed top-down development model with the promise of grassroots farming that sustains the environment and communities. The "progress" of development has returned to what was once deemed "backward"—the methods used by many small-scale farmers before their livelihoods were globalized. This agroecological food production model is a diversified approach, which reduces chemical inputs, and instead works with the environment, drawing on local knowledge and biodiversity of place (pollinators, and animal and plant species genetically adapted to the local environment) to create healthy, varied foods and support the livelihoods of local people. This supports small-scale, family farming, which, although more labour-intensive, is now deemed to be capable of producing yields that positively affect food security. While few comprehensive studies have been conducted to compare yields between monocropping and the polycropping of agroecological farming, the data does look promising (IPES-Food 2016, 10; CoDyre, Fraser, and Landman 2015; Boillat, Gerber, and Funes-Monzote 2012). Through a combination of water conservation, reforestation, and agroecological farming, the GHG emissions of food production can be mitigated, and local populations can begin to adapt and acquire some resiliency to climate change. This approach is championed by La Via Campesina and has become a major force in rural renewal, and a model for urban agriculture across the world. However, its wholesale acceptance will involve a paradigm shift: preserving the agricultural land base, increasing the wages of agricultural workers to add social value as a career choice, and changing household budgetary attitudes toward food spending as food prices increase. Consumers are deeply implicated in the success of this transformation, as they buy healthier, possibly more expensive, food.

RESETTING THE MENU: FOOD SECURITY AND HEALTHY FOOD

This brings gastro-politics down to the eating of specific foods—truly the politics of the stomach—and raises questions about food choices and how meanings are constructed to appeal to consumers. It is about the power of the food industry to provide foods that fit with the demands of everyday life, and to tap into food's role in identity work, and the health consequences of eating these foods. This is where the food industry meets the needs of consumers, yet consumers are empowering themselves to make their own informed choices (Beagan et al. 2015). It is also the site where the Food and Agriculture Organization and World Health Organization agendas hit the ground: on the shelves and plates, and in the minds and stomachs, of local foodscapes and people. Competing, alternative meanings are at play, circulating in public discourse, and entering into individuals' decision-making, as we will see in the next chapter, which focuses on consumption, meaning-making, and the politics of locavorism.

This meaning-making (classifying food and giving it a value, good or bad) and its ability to influence people's behaviour (food choices and support for alternative production methods, or not) return us to the supermarket in Guatemala and, by extension, the globalized act of shopping. This follows the resetting of FAO and WHO top-down initiatives, which, while linked to the global food system, all now focus on the local, seeking to solve malnutrition one place at a time. Feeding the world begins with local menus of healthy food. On the Guatemalan supermarket's shelves were the foods of industrial cuisine—attractive and affordable to many urban residents, suited to changing working lives by providing quick and convenient meals. According to the WHO, some of these foods are the sources of an unhealthy diet, agents of contagion, carrying NCDs into the molecules of their consumers. As part of the WHO Action Plan, across Guatemala, from the rural highlands to urban centres, nutrition educators are teaching people about the perils of bad foods, such as sugar, ice cream, cake, fat, jam, crackers, Coca-Cola, hamburgers, pasta, pizza, and fried chicken, and about the necessity of eating good food, identified as having lots of vitamins and minerals: the makings of a healthy diet (Yates-Doerr 2012). From the point of food security, industrial cuisine does assure availability and access, and it does meet food preferences; however, many dispute that these meet dietary needs suited to an active and healthy life. The challenge the WHO faces, together with Guatemalan health-care workers, is how to reverse the irresistible meanings of industrial cuisine and fast foods as "good," modern, and capable of communicating social competency, and replace them with a "bad" designation? How to undo Guatemala's malnutrition caused by industrial cuisine? How to move toward food security?

To begin to answer thesequestions, we can revisit the four pillars of food security, and consider how these have been refined through the resetting of the FAO and WHO agendas, and how they can be understood in the context of Guatemala—and by extension, anywhere where industrial cuisine has made inroads (see **Box 8.2**, Bringing Food Security Home). The two agencies, together with grassroots activists, have worked with national governments to target the availability, access, and utilization of industrial cuisine, and all have sought to stabilize the local food system to ensure the sustainable production of healthy foods. These initiatives are by no means complete, nor entirely successful, but they do offer hope for the future of food security. The WHO action plan looks to (1) the food environment: targeting labels, providing healthier food choices in as many venues as possible, facilitating cash subsidies, and restricting advertising of processed foods; (2) the food system: strengthening alternative provisioning, and local rural-urban links, which works with the FAO agenda; and (3) consumer behaviour: providing education, counselling, and health-care support (Hawkes, Jewell, and Allen 2013; Hawkes, Harris, and Gillespie 2017, 39).

The debate around the availability of food has shifted to include not only the quantity but also the quality of food, focusing on the provision of a wide range of nutrient-rich vegetables rather than a restricted selection of staples. Residents of urban centres have access to a greater

BOX 8.2:
FOODSCAPE GROUNDED: BRINGING FOOD SECURITY HOME

The four-pillars approach of the UN assessment of food security and insecurity can be applied to everyone's life and serves as a useful model to access our own food security/insecurity status. This exercise will provide a comparison point to understand the experiences of other community members and the very real struggle to find food. Take a moment to map out your food acquisition in your local foodscape; use your daily or weekly experiences of buying and eating food. Think of this as an audit of what is available, and what you use.

- **Assess**, *using the following suggestions, the level of food security/insecurity surrounding the* **availability of food** *pillar. Consider the quality and quantity of foods available in your locality: fresh, local, seasonal, healthy, nutritious foods; processed and packaged foods; foods of mixed origin with long-distance supply chains; foods of properly labelled provenance. Where can you shop or get ready-made food in the vicinity of your home or en route to your place of work?*
- **Consider** *the* **access** *pillar through food prices, managing a budget, and balancing all household costs, together with the predictability of income. Another reality check involves calculating how many paycheques we are away from the food bank. Neighbourhoods significantly influence access to food through the social dynamics of class, ethnicity, and race, and through the provision of services. Are the shops and restaurants easy to get to: within walking distance, or a transit ride or drive away? Do you shop on a daily basis, or can you plan ahead, store, and manage your own home access? Can you grow your own food, or do you rely on alternative food delivery systems? Can you prepare, cook, and take time to eat?*
- **Contemplate** *the* **stability** *pillar by destabilizing the current state of affairs in your imagination. It has been said that all societies are "nine meals away from anarchy," which is an unsettling reality check about the state of the global food system. This was voiced in 1906, but resonates through the despair of people in today's world: in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina in 2005; in Haiti after the earthquake in 2010; and in sub-Saharan Africa in 2017. Imagine a dystopian scenario, and consider your options. Inflation can cause food prices to rise; how would this affect your eating? The just-in-time provisioning system can lead to shops running out of supplies very*

continues…

box 2.1 continued…

quickly, with panic setting in; where would you turn to get food? What would you do after the ninth meal?

- **Examine** *your* **utilization** *of the available and accessible foods in your foodscape. Have you had the opportunity to exercise your ethical standards, such as through buying locally grown foods and nutritious, low-carbon-footprint, fair trade, organic, humanely reared produce? Is there provision of local services to properly dispose of food waste and to recycle food packaging? Can you exercise your personal and cultural taste preferences within the local foodscape offerings and your financial means? Can you call upon learned culinary skills and knowledge to enable you to cook and eat healthy foods? Is there a social support network for helping and for sharing meals?*
- **Reflect** *on the real presence of food insecurity in the midst of plenty, and the availability, access, stability, and utilization of social safety nets.*

diversity of foods in supermarkets and convenience stores, as well as street markets, which sell more traditional local foods (fruit, vegetables, and meats). But despite the wider availability of nutrient-rich foods, urban dwellers more often turn to industrial cuisine—which can be explained by the demands of work in an informal cash economy, the presence of greater advertising, and the cache of industrial cuisine—and are thus more susceptible to NCDs (Ruel, Garrett, and Yosef 2017, 27–29). To undo the social appeal of industrial cuisine, the WHO has sought the help of the media, promoting celebrities as taste makers, as an important, informal, emulatory, educational model. Feeding the rural community requires that a balance be reached between the quantities of crops grown for export and those diverse foods grown to satisfy local food security. In the highlands of Guatemala, small-holder farmers are turning some of their land to growing specialty coffee beans to serve the increasingly differentiated Euro-American consumer taste for single, local-variety beans (see chapter 9). While this is still risky due to the volatile nature of the coffee market, this diversification is regarded by the farmers as preferable to other forms of wage labour and offers a relatively secure livelihood (Fischer and Victor 2014, 168–69). Here, traditional subsistence crops—corn, beans, and squash—are still grown, supplemented by some purchased foods, made affordable through the sale of coffee. It remains to be seen how long the cultural value of the locally available foods remains strong.

The FAO agenda has shifted to the augmentation and protection of the environment, working with nature and local knowledge to enhance biodiversity. However, agroecological endeavours will require investments—income support, for instance—to help farmers transition away from chemical inputs. As a farming method, agroecology requires a larger labour force and,

FIGURE 8.8
Guatemalan Food Seller: A young woman texts while waiting for customers at her roadside vegetable stall. Cellphone use facilitates the sales of fresh produce in urban centres, connecting suppliers, sellers, and customers.

consequently, decent wages to attract workers. This requires the long-term commitment of state governments, whose own agendas shift according to the political parties in power. National food policies, if they are implemented, will need to rise above party politics to work toward food security. Some individual farmers, and organizations like La Via Campesina, are making agroecological farming a reality, and countries like Cuba have become leaders in this form of food production (Boillat, Gerber, and Funes-Monzote 2012). The availability of agroecological products also hinges on the mechanisms of distribution and exchange, all of which can enable or impede individuals' and groups' access to food. However, alternative provisioning systems, such as farmers' markets and food-box systems, are now successfully bringing healthier food choices into many global cities and supporting the local rural economy. The use of cellphones, in Guatemala and in urban centres across the developing world, is recognized as a means to link rural farmers with urban vendors and to facilitate new provisioning mechanisms (Graziano da Silva and Fan 2017, 15). Government subsidies can make healthier foods affordable, and public procurement initiatives to source food from local suppliers are helping to support local rural communities and to provision urban centres. Enabling urban residents to claim vacant land in cities for community gardens has also made inroads into making healthier foods available (Giorda 2012). Finally, the income disparities of any society will affect attainment of food security, and the alleviation of such inequalities demands state intervention through social assistance programs. The continuing correlation between malnutrition—of all

kinds—with poverty, attests to a lack of compassionate national governance. Governments all too often delegate responsibility to local food banks and NGO food aid programs. Food banks are conscious of the need to provide more nutritious foods, and some in North America are moving to growing their own, by methods that include aquaculture and hydroponic vertical gardening.

The stability pillar places the foundation of food security within the operations of local and global society, and its gastro-politics, aspiring toward equitable production, distribution, and sustainability—environmentally and socially, now and in the future. Local food security is sought through global measures, and local resiliency has become a key component of recent sustainable initiatives. Resiliency rests upon diversified, rather than globally uniform, activities to grow food, combined with alternative livelihoods to buy food. In Guatemala, resiliency in rural communities is occurring. Local cooperatives are enabling farmers to take out small loans, invest in land, diversify their incomes by growing both coffee and subsistence crops, and become relatively self-sufficient (Fischer and Victor 2014). This position has arisen from the increasing instability wrought by climate change, and acknowledgment that its anthropogenic origins demand that our lifestyles change, which will be considered in the next chapter. The feed-the-world agenda has shifted to local responses in a global effort to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

The final pillar of utilization brings food security—in Guatemala, and elsewhere—down to the level of individual choices. The quality and quantity of *types* of food available are important, and people's access is mediated by local cuisines, which make food security about more than just satisfying hunger. This addresses the meaning-making surrounding food, making it culturally and socially valuable as part of identity work, lending food the ability to emotionally satisfy and to instil a sense of well-being. Food security initiatives have come to embrace local knowledge (cuisine/nutrition), learned as part of socialization and enculturation, because it influences food choices and can offer secure guiding principles to inform healthy eating patterns. Any disruptions to the transmission of this knowledge are now recognized as opening a path to malnutrition. To securely feed the world, suitable healthy foods must be restored for some, while for others, guiding food rules need to be revitalized, to help them choose healthy foods. The utilization of food through the guiding rules of local cuisines as healthy diets also draws attention to the nutritional dimension of food security. For instance, Mexico has sought to safeguard cooking traditions, recipes, dishes, and the creativity of women cooks in Michoacán to protect the community from the onslaught of industrial agriculture and cuisine (UNESCO 2010b).

New meaning-making begins the steps toward resetting global menus and reversing the appeal of industrial cuisine, especially fast food. This cuisine is deemed to be "good" because of its taste and social appeal: its sensory tastiness of salty, sweet, energy-boosting satisfaction, together with its ability to satisfy practical and emotional needs for convenience and cheapness,

FIGURE 8.9

Smashed Avocado: Smashed avocado on toast, an innocent, tasty food loaded with meaning. This Australian foodie trend has been blamed for millennials' inability to afford housing in the world's most expensive cities. It would take a century of skipping this lunch to save enough for a mortgage. So is it the lunch that is unaffordable—or housing?

and the social allure of emulation and urban competency. If we think back to Mintz's work on the ascendency of sugar in nineteenth-century Britain—the processes of intensification and extensification—we can see that today's industrial cuisine, like sugar, has a firm hold over public food choices. Intensification makes its meanings valuable in the hectic schedule of working life, and extensification makes industrial cuisine available and accessible everywhere, especially in poorer neighbourhoods (Butler 2017). To reverse the hold of industrial cuisine, the positive social and cultural meanings of healthy food need to be emphasized, local culinary traditions need to be referenced, and opportunities to acquire, cook, and eat healthy food need to be expanded. For a healthy diet, and to work toward food security, revived and new meanings need to be communicated as relevant to everyday life. This can best be achieved by focusing on the food itself—its nutritional substance, packaging, labels, price, advertising, availability and use—and on efforts to increase its appeal for consumers. This becomes the site for new meaning-making: to gain the attention of consumers as they reach for a product, cook at home, or seek somewhere to eat out, and engage them in a new conversation about their

culinary choices and their health. The next chapter explores more specifically the making of local meanings, and how the global is made at home in our foodscapes.

Across the globe, our societal circumstances will differ profoundly, but we are united by our need for food security, by the interventions of the agencies of global and local governance, and the presence of the food industry. We are also united by our vulnerability to NCDs, caught from the supposedly simple act of eating, but orchestrated by the powerful gastro-politics of the global system. This reminds us all that we make ourselves—biologically, socially, and culturally—through the foods that are available and accessible, and we all engage in everyday gastro-politics to secure the foods that satisfy our needs. This can be a struggle, full of emotions, the exercise of will power, and rules for treats and rewards. While we imagine ourselves as single, independent individuals, we must remember that we are wrapped in social relationships and dependent on societal institutions, all of which influence our life chances—from food choices to health care, leisure, and work opportunities. Ultimately, food security can only be accomplished through social support, and societal change, making it everyone's issue, not that of each single person who struggles to make the right choice.

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Food and Agriculture Organization. 2017c. "The State of Food and Agriculture: Leveraging Food Systems for Inclusive Rural Transformation." Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization. Accessed January 2, 2018. http://www.fao.org/3/a-I7658e.pdf.

These two annual publications are useful statements of the activities of the FAO and WHO. The first is published by a range of UN agencies and draws attention to the current causes of hunger and malnutrition, offering insight into how UN food security targets are being met. The second presents science-based assessments of issues facing food and agricultural development, and for global food security.

Sanabria, Emilia. 2016. "Circulating Ignorance: Complexity and Agnogenesis in the Obesity 'Epidemic.'" *Cultural Anthropology* 31 (1): 131–58. https://doi.org/10.14506/ca31.1.07.

This ethnographic material explores the public downplaying of corporate responsibility and the overemphasizing of individuals' responsibilities to know about healthy eating and alleviate NCDs. It delves into the nature of evidence, the involvement of the food industry in nutrition advice and regulation, and the social construction of ignorance.

Trapp, Micah M. 2016. "You-Will-Kill-Me Beans: Taste and the Politics of Necessity in Humanitarian Aid." *Cultural Anthropology* 31 (3): 412–37. https://doi.org/10.14506/ca31.3.08.

This article considers how Liberians in refugee camps deal with the foods provided by humanitarian relief programs, which bring calories and nutrients, but lack taste and satisfying meanings. It addresses food security at the level of utilization, and the refugees' efforts to cook up meaning, and create "a palatable and politicized cuisine."

Yates-Doerr, Emily. 2015. *The Weight of Obesity: Hunger and Global Health in Postwar Guatemala.* California Studies in Food and Culture, edited by Darra Goldstein. Oakland: University of California Press. https://doi.org/10.1525/california/9780520286818.001.0001.

This ethnography adds to the account of Guatemalans' understanding of nutrition advice as they deal with obesity and health problems. It offers important insights into diet, weight, body image, and the dominance of scientific measurements that don't match people's lived culinary experiences.

Holmes, Seth. 2013. *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the United States.* California Series in Public Anthropology, edited by Robert Borofsky. Berkeley: California University Press.

The stories of invisible immigrant farm workers are told in this important ethnographic account, which details the dangers, hardships, and racism within the agricultural system.

FIGURE 9.1

Choosing Heirloom Tomatoes, Farmers' Market: Customers carefully select their tomatoes.

CHAPTER NINE

LOCAL DIGESTION

Making the Global at Home

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- *Trace foodscapes as sites of local consumption, linked to global production and distribution.*
- *Examine the de-commodification of food through assigning local values and meanings, as part of people's social relation and identity work.*
- *Describe the localization of global foods, using the examples of sushi, hamburgers, and coffee.*
- *Assess the rise of locavorism as a revitalization movement, and its effect on local foodscapes.*
- *Compare the meanings and values ascribed to food at supermarkets and farmers' markets.*
- *Consider the local and global implications of ethical consumption.*

INTRODUCTION

At a summer farmers' market in Burnaby, British Columbia, an organic vegetable stall is a popular place to buy seasonal produce. It is often busy with Saturday morning shoppers, chatting with the young stallholders while selecting from multi-coloured beets, curly and round cucumbers, brightly hued peppers, brown-skinned onions, and purple-tinged heads of garlic. This stall is particularly known for its heirloom tomatoes, grown in the dry heat of the Stein Valley, a short distance into the province's interior. The tomatoes range in size from small, round, and elongated forms, to large, lobed, hand-filling specimens. The colours range from vivid reds, through oranges and purples to rich, striped greens and yellows. Most tomatoes have pungent leaves attached, and some have slight splits, telling of the bursting seedy juices inside. The customers pick their tomatoes carefully, hefting them to gauge weight, some piling them precariously, cradled against their bodies, while others hold them clasped in paper punnets, making them *their* tomatoes, before taking them to the scales. A brief monetary transaction follows, and the

tomatoes are stowed away in cloth grocery bags, while friendly conversations ensue and the odd chili pepper is handed over, as a gift, "because they're good for you."

This farmers' market scene could be practically anywhere in North America, Western Europe, Australia … because this less commercial venue has become *the* place for buying local, seasonal, foods from smaller producers. The heirloom tomatoes are valued as "good" food, the poster fruit of the **locavore** movement, full of rich meanings, referencing healthiness, tradition, authenticity, uniqueness, and locality. The knobbly, sometimes split, forms defy supermarket perfection and bring a new sensory aesthetic to the consumers' evaluative criteria of good food. The green-striped Zebra and the deep reddish-black Brandywine are vine-ripened, named heirloom tomatoes, which stand in direct contrast to seasonless, corporate tomatoes. They recall the ancient Meso-American origins of tomato growing, from saved seeds, and subsequent transportation around the globe after the Columbian Exchange. Across the continents, tomatoes were slowly adopted, made at home, and finally embraced as a staple ingredient in many cuisines: Italian, Greek, Spanish, and Indian, for instance (Gabaccia 2006; Helstosky 2008). With the journeys of migrants, heirloom tomatoes finally returned to North America, especially with Italian immigrants, for whom they offered a taste of the homeland, with its deeply valued San Marzano heirloom variety. As cuisines were commercialized in restaurants, packaged and sold in supermarkets, tomatoes became standardized as an industrialized agricultural commodity. However, dedicated home growers saved seeds and grew heirloom varieties, which are now commercially grown to meet the public demand for this tasty, healthy, and versatile fruit (Jordan 2007; 2011). The fame of the heirloom tomato has been furthered by public food discourses, its nutritional appeal tied to the Mediterranean diet, its culinary appeal enhanced by celebrity chefs, its gastronomic appeal showcased by the Slow Food Movement, and its sustainability appeal located in locavorism. Farmers' market shoppers use these publicly shared values and meanings of heirloom tomatoes to make decisions about their food purchases, their home cooking, and the meals they share with family and friends. Perhaps more than any other fruit, these tomatoes represent a revitalization of our relationship with food, harking back to small-scale production, taste, variety, choice, and ingredients worthy of home cooking and eating. They tell a story of mobile food, homelands and migrations, accommodations and creolization, resistance and revitalization, and the search for authentic food of a place—at home, through which identity is made. Farmers' markets are just one site of consumption in a foodscape, and this chapter visits other sites (supermarkets and shops, fast food restaurants, coffee stores) and other foods (sushi, burgers, and coffee), and finally comes back home, across the threshold of intimacy, to address consumers' motivations.

FOODSCAPES: MATERIALIZING GLOBAL FOODS

Foodscapes are a useful concept to explore how the global food system is materialized in specific places and acquires meanings in those locations through incorporation into people's lives. The heirloom tomatoes are part of this global system, but they are locally grown, sold, and eaten as valued and meaningful food. The concept of the foodscape is a means for imagining the interconnected global system, with its flows of people, ideas, technology, money, and foods, together with its mediated knowledge of our participation in its vastness. Foodscapes bring these flows to the ground—the local production and importation of foods, retailing, restaurants and street foods reflective of multiculturalism—and into people's houses as part of their daily meals. To make the local presence of the global food system apparent, we can travel through a foodscape, stopping at places where food is encountered, consumed, and used as part our social relationships and personal identity work. This turns our attention to the variety of foods available, as ingredients we purchase and as ready-made foods, and to questions of how local communities have made sense of foods such as sushi, burgers, and coffee, with distant origins and cultural connotations, and made them locally meaningful. We eat the foods of our home, try the foods of other people's homes, make new foods at home, and come to define ourselves through these foods in relation to specific places and people. Through these acts, we come to know our foodscape and embrace the ways in which it changes over time.

Throughout the world, the arrival of new foods provokes a response, which can involve a simultaneous embracing of global food, outright rejection, or a re-evaluation of local foods. This is part of the global ideoscape of cosmopolitanism, the outward orientation toward the global scene as a defining aspect of modern life, and it accentuates the concurrent grounding of the local and its orientation toward having a place in the world. Localism, the emphasis upon life in a place, has become a powerful global ideology, and its expression in terms of food is locavorism, the conscious decision to eat locally produced food to support the local community. A globalized food system would appear to be at odds with locavorism, and yet the reality is a hybrid system that reflects the complex outcomes of globalization as a force for diversity, rather than one for unifying and obliterating distinctions. All of these flows are grounded in places and foods, and they become the terrain of our food experiences and our interconnections with others around the world. Foods are easily incorporated into everyday life, but not without thought, since people always notice "what they are and how they can be used" (Mintz 1985, 120–21). Through encounters with food, people are actively constructing themselves as part of the local society, with its norms and its possibilities for them to demonstrate competency in the many social statuses they occupy. This de-commodifies global foods through aligning them with existing food classifications, lending values and meanings that guide consumption within existing patterns. The de-commodification process begins by assessing how well a food successfully satisfies existing needs. These needs can be physical,

including hunger; or dietary, in terms of nutrients, energy, weight loss or gain; or emotional, maybe for a reward after a tiring day; and social, for displaying generational, gendered, ethnic, or class identity. Meanings, on a very general level, are what a food communicates about our place in the world, our relationships with others, and our sense of self in terms of the social statuses we occupy. As a food is consumed, it taps into our cultural understandings of society, the dominant ideologies, and it "fits" the normative patterns of social behaviour. The ability of food to accomplish this realization of personal and social identity will invest it with differing degrees of value, from "good" to "bad," which will vary according to each need. For instance, a burger may be valued as "good" for quickly satisfying hunger, but "bad" in terms of nutrition.

This is a complex and multi-faceted process of meaning-making that has benefited from ethnographic work at each site of consumption (from commercial retail to households) and each level of identification (from national, ethnic, and down to individuals, and in cross-cultural contexts). To chart these responses, we can make our first local foodscape stop at shops and supermarkets, to check out the retailing of meaning, where different foods are sold. Probably hungry after shopping, we will pick up some food to go, choosing the now ubiquitous global foods—sushi and burgers—to gauge how these are locally digested. Feeling revived, we can visit a farmers' market, revitalize our locavore sensibilities, and sample and digest alternative local foods (artisanal Roquefort cheese, for instance) and other meanings that could appeal to our ethical responsibilities, turning us to gastro-activism. With these heady concerns, a wakeful stimulant could boost our resolve, drawing us to a cup of coffee or tea, so readily available in the local foodscape. These drinks stimulate the dilemma of eating locally while desiring global foods, alerting us to the reality of hybrid consumption, and the interconnections between near and far food producers and consumers.

LOCAL SHOPPING: RETAILING THE MEANING OF FOOD

Consider your own foodscape's retailing options and your decision-making process to determine where you will shop, what you will buy, and why you choose specific products. As discussed in chapter 3, supermarkets are the ends of the journeys of mobile ingredients, produced halfway across the globe using industrial agricultural methods. For better or for worse, supermarkets have become the major source of household provisioning in most Western-style societies, and the purveyors of industrial cuisine. Through the efforts of the World Health Organization and local educational initiatives, consumers are becoming increasingly aware of how to evaluate the nutritional meanings of food, but other seductive meaning-making is at work. To understand the process of meaning-making, it is worthwhile considering how supermarket products are presented to consumers, full of identity-making potential.

Product marketing references prevailing social and cultural ideas, appealing to people to try something new and fulfill their needs for health, distinction, and prudent budgeting. This begins the work of making sense of global foods and new ingredients. Quinoa, for instance, originally known only in South America, becomes valuable and meaningful for people around the world, once this seed's qualities are translated into local culinary knowledge about its quick cooking time, its versatility, its taste and texture, and its nutritional qualities. The power of industrial cuisine's meaning-making lies in the retail display, packaging, and branding of foods. This has ushered in a new aesthetic, which demands uniformity of shape, colour, and quality to accommodate the physical space of sale and consumption—to fit on shelves and racks, into baskets, and into the storage and cooking facilities of homes. Along the global food chain, these demands become the concern of producers, such as Guatemalans, whose *guicoyitos* must be perfect; any that fail will be wasted. Food shopping shifts the use of our senses when selecting food—away from the material substance of the food itself and onto the packaging. It brings sight to the fore—to scan shelves and read signs, labels, and prices—pushing our senses of smell and touch into the background. On packaged foods, including loose fruit and vegetables, labels include information about origins, processing, uses, nutrition and calories, expiry dates, and often a story about the product's identity and recipes to inspire cooking. These many messages jostle to capture the shopper's attention and help give food local value. Where once the omnivore's dilemma was solved by learned culinary knowledge and habitual use, we now constantly update our knowledge and trust others' opinions to guide our choices within a dizzying range of foods. Recognizing brands has become part of our shopping literacy. Brands are the named offspring of food corporations and deliver a personality behind the food, one that attempts to engage the consumer in a conversation about taste and place, and to establish a relationship that can easily be personalized and localized. This becomes part of public culinary discourse, with consumers sharing their stories—such as recipes compiled as cookbooks—allowing the brands to take on mythological proportions as trusted foodstuffs (Kniazeva and Belk 2007). Brands often come to be identified with ethnic groups or nations, and some brands, such as Coca-Cola and McDonald's, have become so worldly that the corporate and national origins are forgotten (Miller [1998] 2005; Foster [2006] 2009; Watson [1997] 2006; Caldwell 2005).

Branded foods feature prominently in advertising, another successful means of socializing and enculturating consumers to food products that will fit the demands of local society. From product placement to sponsoring community events, through broadcast, digital and print media, the meanings of food are constantly disseminated. Something as ordinary as shop flyers offer multiple de-commodification strategies for consumers. Flyers are visually cued, arranged into specific food groups—protein, carbohydrates, dairy, vegetables, and luxury items—reminiscent of nutritional guides. The centrality of meat items is very noticeable, with peripheral vegetables, indicating the construction of "the proper meal." These are culinary documents, charting the engagement of the food industry with mainstream national cuisine.

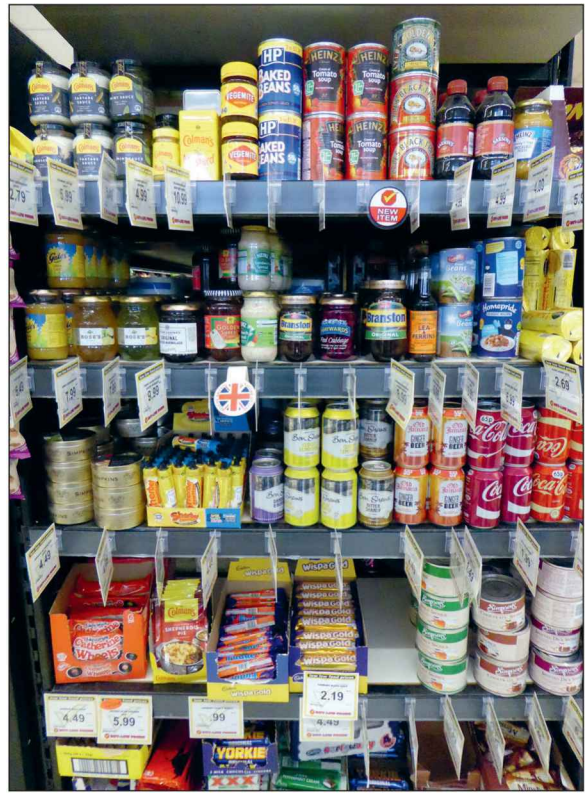

FIGURE 9.2
Branded British Industrial Cuisine: Display of British brands at a Canadian supermarket.

Here the invention of tradition is evident, as the food industry becomes an agent of continuity and change. For instance, flyers for dominant public holidays showcase the selection of branded foods needed for the celebration. New holidays can be included, such as Chinese New Year, Cinco de Mayo (sponsored by Old El Paso tex-mex foods), and national holidays, such as Canada Day—all normalized with meaningful food choices (Pilcher 2010; 2012, 113, 189). On the ordinary pages of a food flyer and the shelves of supermarkets, national cuisines are constructed from an amalgamation of culinary traditions, ingredients, and flavours, and dishes brought together by historical circumstances: colonialism and immigration. This is the retail shaping of mainstream cuisine, the culinary neutral of a nation, which is far from neutral. These are made familiar through the ongoing socialization and enculturation of everyday family life, as people learn and engage in their local eating traditions. Shops offer the necessary ingredients of a national cuisine, sourced from anywhere, and yet identifiable and meaningful as part of the country's imagined culinary tradition.

FIGURE 9.3
Cinco de Mayo Display: Supermarket display using a national holiday to sell "Mexican" food products.

Immigrants face another food shopping reality, because the food of a homeland has a strong emotional connection. Global migrations give new meanings to life lived as a local, witnessing adjustments between newcomers and the original inhabitants. Migrants will have brought easily portable goods and ideas, such as their culinary knowledge and skills, sometimes employed as a source of income. While newcomers are putting down new roots, their life in a new land involves some continuity with their homeland, often sought through tastes, flavours, ingredients, dishes, and cooking techniques. These specific tastes may not be met by the mainstream foods sold by supermarkets; instead, smaller "ethnic" shops become an important part of the retail foodscape of urban centres in multicultural states (Renne 2007). Much like ethnic restaurants, such shops constitute an economic niche for many immigrant families and speak to food's ability to maintain a connection to family and home, and to project a cultural identity (Sutton 2001). The foods—both raw ingredients and packaged, branded foodstuffs and dishes—also carry connections to a homeland; tastes trigger nostalgic memories of "the old country's" cuisine. For both long-established ethnic groups, such as the British in Canada, or fairly recent immigrants, access to the foods of home is important. For example, Mary's British Home store in British Columbia sells a profusion of the best-known British food brands, such as Branston Pickle, Walkers Crisps, and PG Tips teabags. There are also locally made British dishes—steak and kidney pies, sausages, and sweet biscuits—reproducing the tastes of home. The walls of the shop are decked with pictures of the royal

family, characters from Coronation Street, and jerseys of well-known sports teams. This is an exaggeration of all that is British, happily consumed by "Brits" abroad, whose regional accents are noticeable among the shoppers and serving staff. Elsewhere, in the San Francisco Bay Area, Indian immigrants shop for the foods of their homeland at specialty South Asian stores, where branded Glucose biscuits, spices, cooking equipment, fabrics, and culinary advice are found. Both of these stores are "spaces of familiarity," bringing comfort for strangers in a foreign land through smells, images, music, knick-knacks, accents, and serving styles. The branded foods, such as biscuits, are capable of transporting people back to a distant childhood, acting as "cultural mnemonics," triggering meanings of a homeland and its culture, and memories of home, traditions, family, and community (Mankekar 2002, 86). In a new location, once-ordinary brands take on a greater value, through their capacity to evoke these powerful emotional connections to a homeland (Mankekar 2002, 86–89). Each nation's brands—Indian or British—are products of the food industry and its local marketing of industrial cuisine. Furthermore, in any foodscape, ethnic stores also offer opportunities for experimental home cooks intent on learning a new cuisine through purchasing "authentic" ingredients, flavours, and cooking equipment. Whether frequented by ethnic insiders or outsiders, these are places

FIGURE 9.4
British Home Store, Canada: A store selling all things British for expatriates living in Canada.

where the localized domestication of global foods, dishes, cuisines, and people is at work. For immigrants, access to old culinary traditions helps them feel local while global, while for others the access to new ingredients and cuisines is an opportunity to extend their home cuisine and feel global while local. A hybrid, creolized cuisine emerges, adapted to the new social environments and locally produced substitutable ingredients. The portable cuisine of a homeland is remade in response to the new locality, becoming part of its foodscape. As food is consumed, its meanings are digested along with its energy and nutrients, lending it social, emotional, and physical value. This process reveals the power of food to make people feel at home and to connect them to other times, places, and people.

FAST AND TASTY: LOCALIZING GLOBAL DISHES

Foodscapes include a wide range of public dining choices, as outlined in chapter 7, which serve the needs of commensality and identity work. This section extends our discussion of gastro-politics to consider how the food itself is localized. The reception of specific types of foodstuffs—sushi and burgers, for example, both named dishes—that are served in a particular manner, reproduced around the world, eaten in public or made at home, are invested with new local meanings. Both are now forms of fast food, standardized through the global demands of rapid service and ease of consumption, and this characteristic is an important aspect of the food's localization. Fast food "fits" the social context of a wage-labour economy, and the limits placed on people's time and incomes. It can be a necessity for some, but for many it is a choice; it is fast and it is tasty, delivering gustatory satisfaction and social distinction. The reception of fast food is often mixed, though. On the one hand, global fast food represents an opportunity to eat culturally varied food carrying national baggage, such as pizzas (Italian), sushi (Japanese), hot dogs and burgers (American), tacos (Mexican), and fish and chips (British). Fast food can satisfy consumers with a quick burst of flavours, and some choices deliver packaged cosmopolitanism. On the other hand, wherever fast food becomes available, it simultaneously elicits anxiety that it will lead to culinary uniformity—destroying local cuisines, eroding the authentic tastes of place, and reducing distinct cuisines to poorly packaged, inauthentic versions. The uniformity of fast food—especially that sold by global franchises—requires standardized ingredients, packaging, and working conditions, which affect food production, waste, and workers' rights. Fast food also triggers health anxiety, often delivering cheap, high-fat, nutrient-poor foods, which the urban, working poor find hard to resist. These foods have been directly implicated in the global epidemic of obesity and NCDs. This is a dynamic reality, which sees each locality and social group assign meanings, values, and practices onto the introduced foods and method of delivery.

FIGURE 9.5
Sushi to Go: The culinary aesthetics of sushi mark it as Japanese even in its globalized existence.

Sushi, as many know it—raw fish on rice that has been cooked with sugar and vinegar—is more properly called *nigiri-zushi*, and today it is a mainstream, no-longer-exotic global food, thoroughly embraced as just one among many choices for a quick meal. In Japan, sushi came into existence in the mid-nineteenth century as a fast street food, or a Tokyo-style snack (Bestor 2001, 85; Cwiertka 2005, 253). It moved from these humble beginnings into *Sushiya*, restaurants where intimidating chefs made sushi for wealthy patrons, rebranding it as an expensive delicacy, a status it occupied for a while outside Japan in its global infancy. From the 1950s, innovative conveyor belt *kaiten-zushi* restaurants revolutionized, industrialized, and returned sushi to its popular roots, where it has remained (Cwiertka 2005, 253–56).

Sushi's popularity away from Japan began in North America, where immigrant Japanese communities were established and restaurants initially served only their own community. At this time, Japanese cuisine was reserved as a taste of home away from home for *Issei*, *Nisei*, *Sansei*, and on through subsequent Japanese-American/Canadian generations. Beginning in the late 1960s, sushi became a crossover food, coinciding with Japan's status as a major business partner with North America and a growing appreciation of Japanese electronics; sushi now acquired a prestigious status and became useful in terms of local identity work. Sushi was valued for its ability to communicate social distinction, a taste for exotic food—lending it meaning as a marker of class and a cosmopolitan orientation (Bestor [2000] 2005, 14; Cwiertka 2006, 181–99; de Solier 2013, 58–61). In Europe, there were relatively few Japanese immigrants,

and restaurants that did operate were directed more toward conservative Japanese businesspeople, diplomats, and Japanese tourists who wanted to eat their own cuisine (Cwiertka 2005, 247). These Japanese, surrounded by exotic European foods, valued sushi for its familiarity and ease of consumption. Japanese immigrants still do not feature significantly in European nations, and the consumption of sushi by non-Japanese members of society has little to do with acknowledging or coming to know an ethnic minority through their food. The European "sushi boom" really took off in the 1990s, facilitated by sushi's value as a trendy, healthy food eaten in North America, as seen in movies. It began as a rarefied, exotic, and expensive delicacy served in chic sushi bars to yuppies, and gradually became more affordable with the advent of chain sushi bars. By 2017, it has become so mainstream that it is available in train stations and supermarkets. Europeans valued sushi for its fashionable trendiness and—since its increased popularity coincided with greater public concern about meat consumption and weight loss—as a health food.

Part of sushi's global success involves its delivery: the conveyor belts, small plates, and bento-box style accommodate time constraints and offer the possibility of smaller, portable meals for workers. Similarly, sushi's culinary aesthetic is conducive to a local makeover without loss of its traditional Japanese format and characteristic flavours (Bestor 2001; [2000] 2005; 2007; Cwiertka 2005; 2006). There are many different types of sushi, such as *maki-zushi* (rolls made with *nori*, seaweed, and a variety of fillings) and *chirashi-zushi* (sushi rice in a bowl, topped with a variety of *sashimi*, sliced raw fish). Wasabi and pickled ginger have become standard accompaniments to any form of sushi, completing Japanese flavour associations for many. Global aesthetic consistency is found in sushi's simplicity, often described as controlled or cultured nature: colours artfully opposed, slices arranged symmetrically, round contrasting with straight, textures balanced, and edibles displayed within or outside rice (Allison 1991; Noguchi 1994; Bestor 2001; Cwiertka 2006). Indicative of local meaning-making, these elements make the food recognizably sushi and are subject to creolization techniques: blending, submerging, and wrapping local ingredients into new bite-sized tastes of places. California, British Columbia, Alaska all have sushi rolls named in honour of the place. Yo! Sushi in London, for instance, has their own signature roll, which has been localized by making the food align with the meanings circulating in the local discourses around nutrition (calories) and sustainability (all seafood is 100 per cent responsibly sourced). This meaning-making is a two-way process, enacted at each sushi restaurant around the globe, where diners will be entering into their own meaning-making, gastro-politics, and identity work as they stop by to eat. In comparison to other types of fast food, sushi is often presented as "the fast food of the future … beautiful, good for you and delicious," "high in nutrients yet refreshingly low in calories and saturated fats," reflecting its valuation by its consumers (Itsu 2017). The global success of sushi as a healthy fast food lends promise to World Health Organization initiatives to borrow ideas from the fast food industry to sell healthy food options. This is fast food that can be

evaluated as "good" and employed for cosmopolitan and health-conscious meaning-making in the midst of local foodscapes.

Another American food icon—the hamburger or, more commonly, the burger—is often referred to as the nutritional opposite of sushi and has featured in the junk food classifications of WHO literature and new rules of avoidance. However, despite its many negative associations, the burger also tells a story of localization. Its history goes back to the nineteenth century, but its contemporary incarnation in the fast food empire of McDonald's has established its current reputation (Smith 2008). Established in 1940, McDonald's now has a hegemonic hold on Americans, with staggering numbers eating a McSomething every day. McDonald's success coincided with the rise in incomes for Americans, the acquisition of cars, and homes in the suburbs, and its business style served the needs of this population. The burger reflected the social values of the times, and its consumption satisfied people's aspirations to be modern. Its golden arches have spread throughout the world, reflecting societal change and typifying the commodification of the burger, with its essence of Americana. There are over 36,000 McDonald's in over 100 countries, serving more than 64 million people every day (McDonald's 2017). The format remains the same: burger/sandwich, fries, and a drink, with a relatively limited menu. James Watson and his associates explored the global appeal of this simple formula, which helps answer last chapter's question about why McDonald's became so popular in France. Watson made the important point that while the form of fast food—burgers, in this instance—appears the same, the content, and its meaning, must be located within each local context (Watson [1997] 2006, 196). He also recognized that McDonald's, as much as any other human activity, is worthy of ethnographic analysis, and while the big corporations are instrumental in shaping fast food as part of the global foodscape, local consumers have agency in how they interpret, interact with, and ultimately lend meaning to fast food as part of their lives (Watson [1997] 2006, viii).

As a global corporation, McDonald's provides a recognizable company format, and this is locally interpreted. For instance, in Beijing, China, McDonald's arrived when Chinese ideology turned toward making and enjoying spending money, and the changing nature of families. The filial relationship of the Confucian patrilineal family of the past had been replaced with the conjugal relationships within **neolocal**, nuclear families, and their central focus on their child. The state's one-child policy had made Chinese children the centre of family adoration, making them "Little Emperors and Empresses" whose wishes were to be met (Watson [2000] 2005, 73–74). Here McDonald's successfully served local forms of commensality, such as birthday celebrations, fulfilling parents' desires to provide toys and meals suited to children. In relative terms, McDonald's was expensive, which made consuming its food an act of status enhancement, communicating wealth and progressive modernity. McDonald's was highly valued as a venue in which to treat children and invest in meaningful time with them, demonstrating parents' responsibilities to their children. Unlike in North America, McDonald's in

FIGURE 9.6
McDonald's, Champs Élysées, Paris: A prime location for a "McDo," beloved by one generation of French people and reviled by another.

East Asia worked hard to encourage patrons to stay, with the result that average visits there are 35 minutes compared to 11 in the United States (Yan [1997] 2006; Bak [1997] 2006, 148). This encouragement was crucial to the acceptance of McDonald's, allowing diners to extend their traditional consumption patterns, especially the sharing of food, into the fast food experience. Fast food in China was slowed to accommodate the local social needs of families. In Japan, the delivery method initially represented a break from the more traditional forms of food retail and eating, allowing the Japanese to imagine America through this food and service style, and bringing acceptance of the practice of eating standing up as chic rather than rude (Cwiertka 2006, 165). Now, McDonald's has become a place where families and friends will share their food together, with burgers unwrapped and passed around, and fries centrally placed so everyone can indulge. McDonald's has been appropriated and used for sociable commensality rather than isolated, quick meals. Individualized fast food is being communally enjoyed, with the gastro-politics of age and gender—dictating who eats the most and who does the ordering—remaining intact (Traphagan and Brown 2002, 126–29).

In the former Soviet Union, McDonald's interpreted local interests, and Russian consumers also actively reworked McDonald's to their needs and values (Caldwell 2005). In 1976,

McDonald's Canada (not the American parent company, due to political tensions between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.) began negotiating to bring McDonald's to Russia, and it wasn't until 1990 that the first McDonald's opened in Moscow's foodscape. At that time, the food culture of Russia was shaped by Soviet socialist rule—which meant that the entire food system was under state control, with its political ideology extending into restricted eating practices (Reid 2002; Leigh Smith 2009). Into this context McDonald's arrived, and for a while people went there for the novelty value, to taste the outside world; but by the mid-1990s, a different response to McDonald's emerged, "rendering" it local and domesticated, with a meaningful place in everyday life (Caldwell 2005, 181). This began in earnest when Russians launched a "Buy Russian" campaign, which hinged on the complex idea of *Nash* versus *ne Nash*. *Nash* means "ours," and it conjures up a sense of familiarity, intimacy, place, home, trustworthiness, comfort, and daily life—all valuable things that are good for you, and shared Russian origins. McDonald's quickly aligned themselves, using the slogan *Nash Makdonalds*, "Our McDonald's"—made from locally grown food and eaten by locals. A global fast food became truly grounded in the local foodscape. Adverts reminded Muscovites that the food was sourced from a Russian company whose name, "white cottage," summed up the essence of *Nash*—this food was grown at *dachas*, a country cottage, traditionally known as the source of the healthiest and most nutritious food. These meanings helped McDonald's localize itself, and added value to its food as a source of identity and belonging for the diners. Further reinforcing this localization, home-cooked food, described by Russians as the authentic Russian food—cooked by Russians for their families—now includes McDonald's-inspired foods with burgers, fries, and milkshakes made at home. Indeed, even the traditional Russian-style fried potatoes have taken on a McDonald's identification, a domesticated French fry (Caldwell 2005, 189). By undergoing a specifically Russian process of localization—Nashification—McDonald's has become a locally meaningful, and hence domesticated, entity (Caldwell 2005, 192). Russians have "incorporated McDonald's into the intimate and sentimental spaces of their personal lives: family celebrations, cuisine and discourse about what it means to be Russian" (Caldwell 2005, 181). People eat at McDonald's before demonstrations, during outings with friends, or for birthdays; they also see it as a place to go and eat your own homemade lunch, or just to hang out, and through this use it has become a "domestic and socially significant space" (Caldwell 2005, 190). The local—the culture of Muscovites—has been reinvented through the inclusion of McDonald's as a domesticated and localized fixture of the foodscape. The local culture and cuisine have changed by incorporating McDonald's, but it is still authentic, remaining true to Russian values and meanings.

In all these examples, from East Asia to Russia, the arrival of new food and eating spaces has presented opportunities for local consumers to expand their culinary experiences—to move beyond the local and embrace new, global, cosmopolitan foods without jeopardizing the integrity of the local. While the venues are indicative of societal change—the arrival of

American, Western-style culture—to experience and address this change, the patrons draw on what they know (traditional meanings and practices surrounding food) and maintain a sense of social continuity through time. Just as cuisines tame new ingredients through the application of accepted culinary aesthetics and the addition of familiar flavours, customers incorporate new eating experiences and their foods into the patterns of life lived in that place. For example, the new sites and styles of consumption exert some influence, "disciplining" the patrons to follow the eateries' patterns, yet the new venues are also oriented to the needs of the customers, offering a chance to share time and food with family and friends, and demonstrate their identity (Mintz 1985, 120–21). Despite this appeal and success, alternative responses also reverberate through the public food discourse, revealing the complex dynamics of meaning-making, which returns us to France, and the rise of locavorism in response to the global.

LOCAVORISM: EATING LOCALLY

Locavorism is an ideology directed toward a renewed commitment to local and seasonal foods when the troubled reality of the globalized food system enters the foodscape. It is a global social movement, an outcome of grassroots activism, and an expression of food security, food sovereignty, and gastro-nationalism, as discussed in the last chapter. McDonald's was affectionately dubbed "McDo" by its enthusiasts in France, who embraced it as a casual, cosmopolitan style of eating that was different from the traditional French approach to cuisine. It was valued by the younger generation, while older generations recoiled in gastronomic horror at the thought of McDonald's as a French favourite. For instance, the farmer gastro-activist José Bové railed against McDonald's bland, processed foods, and claimed its popularity would undermine the preference for the stronger flavours of French cuisine, such as garlic, herbs, cheeses, anchovies, and olive oil. He warned that French cooking and commensality would be lost, resulting in the disintegration of family cohesion and the ties that bind the French to their homeland (Spencer Freeze 2002, 75, 96). McDonald's was responsible for this gastro-anomie, the unsatisfying new culinary reality, and a blight on the centres of gastronomy (Fischler 2000). This assault on the French foodscape was materialized in the form of local French food (Roquefort cheese, valued as "good" food) in contrast to a Big Mac (synonymous with "bad" food, jeopardizing the health of people, the environment, and cuisine). Roquefort, a soft, blue cheese, was the perfect choice, since it was the first French food to receive the country's *appellation d'origine controllé* designation in 1921. To be authentic, Roquefort must be made in the region of Roquefort-sur-Soulzon, by small-scale, artisanal producers, using entirely local ingredients: sheep's milk from humanely raised animals, including the herd owned by Bové. Roquefort carries deep cultural and national meanings, emotionally satisfying consumers' sense of ethical, cultural, national, and gastronomic identity. Anthropologist

Chaia Heller (2007) researched the public discourse surrounding French evaluations of these foods, and their associated meanings, which lend insight to the divergent meanings. The foods can be contrasted as a series of oppositions, illustrated below.

TABLE 9.1 Good Food vs. Bad Food

Roquefort Cheese	*Big Mac Hamburger*
Local	*Global*
Artisanal	*Industrial*
Natural	*Unnatural*
Art	*Science*
Safe	*Risky*
Natural species—biodiversity	*Genetically modified species*
La bouffe—good food	*La malbouffe—junk food*
Quality	*Quantity*
Small-scale	*Large-scale*
Terroir—taste of place	*Placeless production—tasteless*
Handmade, organic, sustainable	*Processed, chemical, damaging*
Minimal packaging and little waste	*Packaged and waste-generating*
Named, distinct food	*Anonymous, generic food*
Sociable	*Individualized*
Rural	*Urban*

Source: c.f. Heller 2007

These meanings are derived from the assessment of the food's origin, ethics of production, level of processing, healthfulness, authenticity, and cost, and articulate how value is determined for locavores (see **Box 9.1**, Pondering Chocolate). Here locavorism has a taste, known as ***terroir***, made evident in the traditional wines, cheeses, chocolates, and other gourmet foods of France associated with a specific place (Trubek 2008). These foods are part of the nation's *patrimoine*, and citizens are expected to acquaint their taste buds with the sensory experience of *terroir*, which invests the products with cultural significance and value far beyond calories and nutrients (DeSoucey and Téchoueyres 2009, 85, 88). In response to these French meanings, McDonald's localized its menu in 2001, with an advertising campaign proclaiming "Une Touche de Région Dans Votre Hamburger" (a regional touch in your hamburger), adding French-sourced ingredients, bringing *terrior* into its burgers, just as the company had done in Russia.

Locavorism has become a global response to the presence of the global, and it is a form of revitalization movement, born from rapid change, which looks to the past as a source for

FIGURE 9.7
Roquefort Cheese: The cheese of French locavorism.

BOX 9.1:
PONDERING CHOCOLATE: ARTISANAL OBJECTS OF DESIRE

A sweet treat awaits in the form of rich dark chocolate chunks, broken from a bar of New Zealand–made Whittaker's chocolate. Chocolate is valued for its sweetness, its melting, rich and satisfying complexities of textures and tastes. It's packaged in bites, and whether indulged in as a reward to oneself, or given to someone else … it is special, and celebrated.

Chocolate is made from the seeds of the cacao tree, and was given the botanical name *Theobroma cacao*—"the food of the gods"—by Linnaeus in 1763. Long before European interest, it was prized by the Maya and Aztecs, who ate, drank and traded it. Chocolate begins life as beans and pulp encased in pods, which are deseeded, with the contents left to ferment in large boxes for five to seven days. The fermentation allows yeasts and bacteria to chemically change and heat the beans, releasing their characteristic flavours. The beans are dried, and are then ready for further processing (West 1992, 112–13). Through the Spanish, the cacao beans and the knowledge of how to transform them into chocolate travelled to Europe. Chocolate was desired by the wealthy, drunk as a fashionable drink, and with its companion, sugar, became the confections enjoyed by the masses from the eighteenth century onward.

continues …

box 9.1 continued…

Its popularity triggered trade wars, led to the establishment of plantations and slavery, and saw the rise of now world-famous chocolate corporations: Lindt, Suchard, Nestlé, Cadbury's, and Hershey's. Through manufacturers, chocolate found its way into the pockets of soldiers, workers, and children: as holiday bounty, a treat to be enjoyed and shared, a box of chocolates. Valentine's Day alone sees chocolate sales of $700 million, evidence of the continuing industrialized production of this delicacy (United States Department of Agriculture [USDA] 2013). Most chocolate is consumed in Western societies, while most of the cacao is grown by small-scale farmers in Africa.

Whittaker's chocolate is no different from others … or is it? This is Marlborough Sea Salt and Caramel Brittle in Milk Chocolate from Whittaker's Artisan Collection. Here is a global commodity—chocolate, grown in Africa—transported to New Zealand and manufactured, in small batches, by artisan chocolatiers using other ingredients sourced from Lake Grassmere, the *terroir* of its new home. It has been localized, and marketed with a story to help the consumer de-commodify a valued food. The package's miniature images depict New Zealand's land and culture—kiwis, ferns, Māori carvings, ships, and lighthouses—all evoking a connection to place and the nation. Made by a local company founded in 1896, the chocolate carries the names of the owners and offers a personal, authentic product, made by real people, in an otherwise anonymous market. The company proclaims its business ethics—equitable working practices, at home and in fair trade initiatives, with Ghana's largest cocoa cooperative Kuapa Kokoo (2017)—and its commitment to sustainable agriculture (Whittaker's 2017). This single chocolate bar is representative of artisanal chocolatiers across chocaholic Western societies, all of whom provide an alternative to corporate chocolate—a locavore response rolled into global chocolate (Leissle 2017).

creating a more satisfying present-day existence. Revitalization movements are usually associated with religious responses to social change, but they can be extended to the secular, as "deliberate, conscious, organized efforts by members of a society to create a more satisfying culture" (Wallace 1956, 279). Any revitalization movement follows a series of developments—a revelatory event and charismatic figures who deliver a timely, compelling message, which converts a broad base of followers who work to make the vision a reality. The revelatory events implicated in locavorism are the many problems associated with industrialized agricultural

ARTISAN COLLECTION
Whittaker's
SINCE 1896
Marlborough Sea Salt
and Caramel Brittle
in Milk Chocolate
Delightfully crunchy caramel brittle combined with Pacific sea salt from Marlborough's Lake Grassmere, then sprinkled through our famous 5 Roll Refined Creamy Milk Chocolate.
33%
BATCH
100g

FIGURE 9.8
Whittaker's Artisan Collection Chocolate Bar:
A sweet treat materializing local and global ethical concerns.

production, and the environmental damage that accompanies it. Also, the distribution of adulterated food brought renewed consumer mistrust and fear over food safety. Through the 1980s, Europe witnessed wine tainted with lethal methyl alcohol, which killed 19 in northern Italy; the poisoning of water sources with herbicide; and the Chernobyl nuclear disaster of 1986 (Leitch 2009, 48). Through the decades, global food scares have continued—BSE, the horsemeat scandal, melanin in milk products, foot-and-mouth disease, e-coli outbreaks—and as awareness of climate change spread, the carbon impact of food miles became real, with violent weather events; all have added to the anxiety. Furthermore, the global initiatives of the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization have added their weight to the relevancy of locavorism's message, making it resonate in every locality.

In Italy, McDonald's was also the perfect locavorism catalyst, spurring the rise of the Slow Food Movement, which today has more than 100,000 members in 160 countries. The opening of a McDonald's in Rome was the "revelatory event" that spurred Carlo Petrini, one of the movement's founders, to deliver a timely message: to revitalize existing local foods and the conviviality of eating. He called on consumers' deep-seated connection to the foods of family, home, and nation, to awaken a new sensibility and willingness to try local foods whilst remaining cosmopolitan. Petrini began his battle against people's enslavement to the demands of

modernity—a fast-paced life and fast food—and called for a deliberate slowing down, a return to the kitchen to enjoy regional foods, develop taste, and embrace the pleasures of gastronomy (Leitch 2009, 45). His ideas were the foundation of the movement's manifesto, directed against "the fast life" that fractures our customs and assails us even in our own homes, forcing us to ingest "fast-food" (Slow Food Movement [1989] 2017a). Today the movement describes itself as a "global grassroots organization" and is still seeking to "prevent the disappearance of local food cultures and traditions, counteract the rise of fast life, and combat people's dwindling interest in the food they eat" (Slow Food Movement 2017b). The movement's philosophy rests on three principles; good, clean, and fair food (Petrini ([2005] 2007, 91–143). These are explained as "Good: quality, flavoursome, and healthy food; Clean: production that does not harm the environment; Fair: accessible prices for consumers and fair conditions and pay for producers" (Slow Food Movement 2017c). These principles have become a significant part of the wider public discourse on food, and they represent a new set of criteria to evaluate what is good to eat, adding meanings that extend beyond individual consumers, and into the wider ethical dimensions, the realm of morals, and shaping a just society. The foodscape in this locavore manifesto is capable of encompassing the global food system, extending the commitment to one local place to all interconnected local places around the world.

The locavore message is well established, and continues to resonate with many consumers, but revitalization movements cannot rest on rhetoric alone—they must demonstrate real strategies to transform the current reality toward something better. For the Slow Food Movement, its Convivia (local membership), Terra Madre and Presidia (global food communities and projects), and **Ark of Taste** (ledger of endangered foods), fulfill the practicalities demanded of successful revitalization. The foods on this ledger tell of a place's culinary past and have become marked as essential to revitalizing a contemporary foodscape and thereby satisfying consumers' search for meaningful eating. The efforts cultivate **ecogastronomy**: the pleasurable eating of heritage foods to ensure their continuity. The presence of heirloom tomatoes at farmers' markets, for instance, can be attributed to the locavore sentiments espoused by the Slow Food Movement. Across the Atlantic, the notions of *terroir* and small-scale artisanal production have also taken hold as locavore revitalization. They were provided with fertile ground by many earlier "back to the land" and counterculture movements of the 1960s and 1970s, which similarly fostered sustainable agriculture, challenged the dominant food provisioning system, and established more ethical choices for consumers (Parkins and Craig 2009; Hergesheimer and Wittman 2012). The re-evaluation of the role of rural communities in strengthening a nation's social, political, economic, and culinary fabric is part of many food sovereignty movements. For instance, the growing numbers of artisanal cheese-makers across the United States reveal a reworking of *terroir* to fit North American entrepreneurial desires, such as adding commercial value to distinguish a unique product, and simultaneously articulate a desire "to showcase the aesthetic and economic value of farm and pastureland"

(Paxson 2010, 452). Smaller artisanal producers are deliberately experimenting with the nature of their land, livestock, and environment to develop unique products that identify the local foodscape. This is a different orientation of *terroir* than is found in Europe; it emphasizes many unique cheeses in one region, rather than one officially recognized brand, but both forms of *terroir* establish the value of the connection between place, people, their knowledge and skills, products, and cultural identity. The small artisanal producers are reinventing the farming tradition and its products as supportive of local communities and the rural economy, and as ecologically sustainable, while also engaging in a commercially viable venture (Paxson 2010). Their commercial success rests upon consumers being willing to pay a little more to support the local equivalent of **fair trade**, to buy into the revitalization of the rural. Legions of taste-makers, from farmers to celebrity chefs, have been instrumental in converting consumers, disseminating locavorism, gathering momentum, and making it a new global culinary normal (Stanford 2006; Pollan 2007).

Locavorism has been spread through public discourse, becoming second nature for many, embraced by both individuals and marketers, as they reshape their culinary endeavours and

FIGURE 9.9
Heirloom Tomato Farmer, Canada: A young, articulate farmers' market stallholder who embodies locavorism and agroecology.

gastronomic sensibilities. These promote a return to the culinary local: producing and eating foods as a means to stall environmental degradation. A prime example of this is the **100-Mile diet**, which maps culinary circles across northern continents, creating environmentally and socially meaningful foodscapes (Nabhan 2002; Heldke 2003; Smith and MacKinnon 2007; Hergesheimer and Wittman 2012). As part of the local mediascape, social media posts and magazines have been vital in shaping this culinary imagination, potentially influencing home cooking through providing recipes and ingredients for locally inspired dishes. The many photographs introduce the readers to the faces of local producers, and lend brand-like familiarity to ingredients that may otherwise remain unsought-after delicacies. The converted can forage for elderflowers and nettles, and buy quinces and Jerusalem artichokes. This search for the culinary local—of both producers and products—has found its ultimate expression in the renaissance of farmers' markets, where consumers can meet the local producers, feel part of the local community, and engage in a more meaningful form of food purchasing.

FARMERS' MARKETS: LOCAL FOODS AND FACES

Across many global foodscapes, farmers' markets offer a return to more personalized food acquisition, and can be understood as a response to people's dissatisfaction with the big food system and anonymous supermarket shopping (see **Box 9.2**, Farmers' Markets). These showcase the local and seasonal produce of a foodscape, and are important for establishing the value and meanings attributed to these foods. As a site for the performance of locavorism, the markets have become important locations for ethnographic analysis (Tiemann 2008; Okura Gagné 2011; Long 2011). In North America, farmers' markets also have a long history, but in the last decade they have become particularly prominent. Farmers' markets explicitly communicate the values of local foods, through leaflets, signs, and conversations—fresh, seasonal, healthful, environmentally and socially sustainable food (CUESA 2010). This is locavore propaganda in action, thoroughly routinized and normalized. Many farmers' markets offer a "third place" for informal social gatherings, one that is neither the home nor the workplace. In these public spaces, people can be public citizens, acting according to broader ethical values to build a more just society. This is the opposite of behaviour in supermarkets, which are spaces where people move through as isolated, private consumers. The sociability of the markets arises from the participants' willingness to linger and have conversations while buying food, and they have become places of social distinction: to be, and be seen. Farmers' markets are encouraging consumers to embrace the short food chain, put faces and names to food producers, and allow local agriculture to survive. Many consumers do buy local foods and are beginning to put names to the faces of farmers. But farmers' markets do not appeal to everyone, and there are unfavourable realities associated with locavorism.

BOX 9.2:
FOODSCAPE GROUNDED: FARMERS' MARKETS

Across continents, farmers' markets communicate the messages of revitalization and display the principles of the Slow Food Movement: good, clean, and fair food. Go in search of a farmers' market, engage in some participant-observation, and involve yourself in its celebration of locavorism:

- **Describe** *the farmers' market, including venue, stalls, range of foods, customers, and atmosphere.*
- **Explore** *and* **find** *examples of the following famers' market characteristics: seasonal and local products; named artisanal producers; named farms; small-batch production; organic and biointensive farming; unusual varieties; produce with dirt and non-uniform sizes; cloth grocery bags.*
- **Experience** *the market by walking and socializing; talk with the growers and craftspeople, sample, and buy if you are able.* **Listen** *to the sounds, take in the smells, and watch people's behaviour toward one another, both customers and stallholders.*
- **Reflect** *on your participant-observation, and consider whether you can identify the dominant public food discourses: culinary, gastronomic, nutritional, and sustainable public food discourses (Long 2011, 56–57).* **Consider** *the question of "authentic" locavorism and the message of revitalization, and whether this is realized.* **Evaluate** *the evidential power of the "local trap."*

The eager embracing of locavorism needs to be tempered by the social, economic, technological, and political realities of the movement. Enthusiasts may, for instance, fall prey to the "local trap," believing all local food is healthier, better for the environment, and socially sustaining; it can be, but many warn against totally digesting the commercial rhetoric (Born and Purcell 2009; Morgan 2010). In regard to class politics, locavorism's appeal has not crossed all lines, and for some the gourmet or "foodie" emphasis does not sit well with society's evident income disparities. Participation in locavore, slow food activities can be costly, and it can be understood as another facet of appropriating food as cultural capital to claim distinction (Chrzan 2004; Leitch 2009). In some instances, the privileging of small-scale artisanal production has turned local peasant food into luxuries for the few; in other cases, factory-produced products, such as Mexican *masa harina*, have been decried as inauthentic, despite the fact that they allow women to make homemade tortillas without the arduous use of a *metate*

(Leitch 2003; Pilcher 2006). Similarly, while French *terroir* conjures up images of traditional methods and hand-crafted, small-batch production, this is not necessarily an accurate picture, since technological innovation can also be embraced in local "traditional" food production (DeSoucey and Téchoueyres 2009, 85). Similarly, as with any grassroots movement and its discourse, locavorism can be co-opted by agribusiness. Think back to the supermarket, for instance, and this becomes apparent; stores are now full of products—supported by big corporation websites— that tell their sustainability stories and feature real farmers' faces and names (Pollan 2007, 137–39). The supermarket use of "real" people and fake farms in named, local places plays with the complex idea of authenticity, and recalibrates the scale of the local, and the personal connection between producer and consumer (Levitt 2016). This trades upon the currency of ethical motivations behind food acquisition, and muddies the clarity of locavorism.

BREW AND SERVE: LOCALIZING A GLOBAL BEVERAGE

Walking with a cup of coffee in hand, either at a farmers' market or a supermarket, has become so normal, accepted, and reassuring. Indeed, foodscapes both rural and urban provide many sites for getting a cup of coffee—to go, or to be enjoyed while sitting with friends or watching life unfold around you. But this act presents a challenge to locavorism: tea and coffee, and other much-loved foods such as olive oil, chocolate, bananas, and many spices, cannot be grown in the northern hemisphere. To begin understand how these foods can be reconciled within locavorism, and to extend the scale of the local and its social relations, we can examine how a global beverage has been localized, and trace the foodscape connections between distant consumers and producers.

The history of coffee houses reveals how the consumption of a bitter stimulant—coffee, largely grown around the tropical equator and consumed in temperate northern climes—has provided a venue for fomenting revolutions, fostering scientific debate, launching commercial enterprises, energizing workers, and allowing meaningful sociality through the centuries (Weiss 1996; Tucker 2017). It is entirely possible that Carlo Petrini was sipping an Italian espresso as he collaborated on writing the Slow Food Movement manifesto. Coffee houses have had an influence on culture and society since the fifteenth century, representing an early localization of a global commodity whose consumption has linked people across many continents. With their caffeine content, coffee and tea helped meet the concentration and energy needs of industrialized workers, and they became the drinks of the Protestant work ethic, and capitalism (Weiss 1996, 101). This places our familiar foodscape experiences of a coffee house—whether a locally owned family business or a global chain, such as Starbucks—into a wider set of historical and social circumstances. We can enjoy a coffee house's "small world" atmosphere of community, and its offer of a third place, to hang out, relax, and socialize while

FIGURE 9.10
Melbourne Coffee Cups: Coffee has been localized, despite its global origins.

enjoying a coffee served according to our tastes. Here, coffee's meaning has allowed previously private activities to be conducted in public, and it articulates people's construction of identity. This is another example of how public space is able to influence people's behaviour, and to gradually be domesticated according to local meanings. For example, to return to post-socialist Russia, the arrival of Western-style coffee houses marked a new location for the public performance of life, requiring some initial adjustments to exposing private lives in such public surroundings (Caldwell 2009, 112, 119). In Russia and elsewhere, coffee has been normalized; the beverage is valued as a stimulant, but drinking it is also a relaxing, sociable activity. In every local foodscape's profusion of coffee retailers, patrons' lives are linked to those of distant coffee producers. Ironically, until the rise of locavorism these global lives were largely absent, and now their traces are found on the packaging and naming of coffee, and even the décor of some coffee houses.

Using the multi-sited ethnographic approach, social anthropologists have been exploring the interconnected lives of distant producers and consumers, and their understandings of one another through the lens of sought-after commodities, like coffee (Bestor 2001, [2000] 2005; Weiss 1996; 2003; Freidberg 2005; Fischer and Benson 2006; Holtzman 2009; West 2012; Tsing 2015). This follow-the-thing approach has proven to be a very useful method for understanding the local as part of globalization. In the case of coffee, it delves into the realities of the coffee producers, whose somewhat romanticized lives can be presented on coffee packages,

and looks at how they use coffee and how it shapes their imagining of global coffee drinkers. However, in any context, those imaginings can be based only on local meanings, constructed by using what is known. For example, Brad Weiss's ethnography on the Haya of Tanzania examines their local consciousness of globalization. In Haya society, coffee was traditionally grown as a tribute for the king, and it was an important part of people's social relationships—used as an offering to ancestors, a symbol of blood brotherhood, and a hospitable gift for household guests to chew (Weiss 2003, 32, 175). During colonialism, the Haya began growing coffee for the international market, but its commodification did not erode its former meanings and value (Weiss 2003, 49–50). The Haya know what they do with coffee: it is about social transactions, a gift to guests, and access to fancy, status-enhancing clothes—bought with the earnings from selling coffee as a commodity. Like Guatemalans, the Haya are constrained by the fluctuations of coffee prices, which makes growing it a rather risky enterprise (Weiss 2003, 189). Thus, coffee is understood through the stable local logic of the Haya, but their incomes fluctuate, bringing instability and leaving them to wonder about the logic of the market. "We Haya grow this coffee, we harvest it, and then we sell it to you in Europe. But what do you Europeans do with it?" (Weiss 1996, 93). Despite the inequality of the global market, small-scale producers, like the Haya and others, have agency in constructing their own worlds, asserting meaning, and drawing understanding, keeping coffee at home, but wondering about its reception in other places (Weiss 2003, 7, 185–87). The commodity chain, however, limits the passage of knowledge from producers to consumers, translating it through the logic of marketing and sales. This lends itself to another question: How many distant consumers of East African coffee wonder about the Tanzanian producers? This returns us to the coffee itself, and our choices, and the construction of values and meanings.

Coffee beans are evaluated in many ways: by type (Arabica and Robusta, for example), by place of origin, depth of roast, grind, and blends, which are often given local names to add further rarity values. Each factor can be accorded a place in a hierarchy of values, often influenced by specialists. These take on meanings as the classification of coffee drinks, which includes freshly brewed drip to elaborately made espresso-based beverages with evocative names, pedigrees, and sizes, appealing to the socially differentiated tastes of coffee drinkers (Weiss 1996, 102). The classification of coffee easily reflects the social order, and within the many choices consumers demonstrate their social identity (Roseberry 1996). Coffee's meanings are encased in its association with daily activities, routines, treats, and the presentation of self through specific styles of drinks. Coffee is a commodity, but it is actively de-commodified by its consumers around the world—no longer exotic or luxurious but ordinary, and a necessary stimulant for some. De-commodification invests the product with meaning as part of life lived at the site of consumption, and it can make consumers forget the origins of the food or drink and obscure the connections between people and places along the commodity chain. But locavorism has added a new awareness, bringing an ethical dimension to coffee drinking, as

FIGURE 9.11
New Zealand Flat Whites: A localized style of coffee, claimed by New Zealand and Australia, that has now "gone global" as a coffee trend.

one of many global products that is looking to support a distant local through consumption in the near foodscape. This has been called "virtuous globalization" by the Slow Food Movement, and takes us into the more hybrid local-global reality of foodscapes.

HYBRID CONSUMPTION: LOCAL AND GLOBAL REALITIES

From heirloom tomatoes sold at a Burnaby farmers' markets to coffee drunk by the Haya in Tanzania, the ability of communities to make foodstuffs at home, surround them with meanings relevant to all social groups, and utilize them as part of everyday practices is evident. These foods may be newly introduced, but they are de-commodified, appropriated, and made sense of according to existing cultural logic; they quickly become normal, fitting into people's ability to competently perform their social roles and communicate their identity. Each food offers qualities that appeal to consumers and fits their lifestyles. These may be the healthfulness and aesthetics of sushi; the simple, predictable formula of a burger that counters the busy-ness of life, while being fast and tasty; or the stimulating wakefulness brought by coffee,

necessary for the business of life. In all the foregoing examples, the presence of the global is apparent and accommodated in the local foodscape, despite the dominance of locavorism.

Locavorism, as a revitalization movement, articulates a new vision for food production and consumption. It is based upon local, seasonal, sustainable foods, which provide for people's livelihoods and communities without compromising the environment, and support animal welfare. Food choices, in this construction, are given wider ramifications, mapped across a foodscape's social relations, the environment, and food species. The foodscape is reimagined as a sliding scale, with local borders that are ever expanding away from one local and into distant locals. This moves from the individual, through family, friends, community, region, and nation, underpinning society itself. It encompasses the local, regional and onwards, from gardens, farms, and plantations to plant and animal food species; from wild to domesticated; from plentiful to endangered. How consumers consciously carry this weighty baggage when selecting something to eat is of great importance—socially, economically, and politically—and highlights the ethical dimensions of food choices. These involve the "green" issues of the environment, especially pertinent under the shadow of climate change, and extend into the welfare of the world's biodiversity. The interrelated "red" issues address the lives of people whose livelihoods depend upon producing foods, raw materials, and consumer goods for the global retailers. Thus, the discourse surrounding locavorism speaks to the ethical dimensions of food choices, the realm of morals, and the transformation of society through the actions of consumers. This is where gastro-politics are scaled to include more and more distant participants, and grassroots gastro-activism is aligned with the sustainability initiatives and messages of the top-down United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization, and the World Health Organization. These organizations have a global scope, working to establish plentiful sustainable, agroecological food production, to end hunger, and to ensure access to healthy food. They address food security at the global level, while locavorism maps food security and sovereignty onto the lives of individuals and families. Interestingly, locavorism brings global food issues into the choices of individual consumers, devolving responsibility downwards but potentially empowering them to bring about real change. The reality check of locavorism within a globalized food system is how to support the local without jeopardizing distant localities—other people's livelihoods that are tied to food availability, access, stability, and utilization. How can consumers exercise ethical consumption locally and globally? Food consumption is a hybrid act; local and global ingredients are purchased—can these be simultaneously fair and sustainable in both places? In short, how can one locality achieve food security without the support of the global community?

If we consider one locale, Britain, the hybrid local-global reality of current food systems can be discerned, and the extent of the locavore revitalization movement identified. British society is based upon industrial agriculture, with a provisioning system that encompasses both local and global sources for foodstuffs, thereby lengthening the food chain from production

to consumption. For instance, in 2015, 52 per cent of Britain's food was domestically produced; 29 per cent came from EU countries, and the rest from across the globe. Two countries accounted for 69 per cent of fresh vegetables, and four countries provided 44 per cent of fresh fruit (DEFRA 2017, 22). Britain's imported food was worth over £42.5 billion in 2015, and exported food was worth £20.1 billion (7). These figures speak to a globalized food system, despite the prominent "buy British" campaign evident over the last decade, with farmers' names attached to fresh products and the Union Jack prominently displayed on packaging. As in other nations, Britons have come to understand themselves as local in response to seeing themselves as global, exercising locavore sentiments through food purchases. Following European Union regulations, the country of origin is displayed on labels; this is clearly significant, with 53 per cent of Britons indicating that when possible they seek British provenance, a choice justified by 49 per cent by a deeper level of trust in the quality of the food; 47 per cent would be willing to pay more to buy British, and 89 per cent reported a desire to support British farmers and food producers (57).

While statistics on food consumption can offer only a snapshot of a much more complex and nuanced reality, they do offer insight into changing attitudes and buying habits, alerting us to the interplay of ethical concerns and economic realities. This projects a kind of moral compass, oriented through the cardinal points of place and people, health and wealth, helping the user guide and evaluate their actions in relation to "good" and "bad" values of food and eating. This is another dimension of the classification of food, the assignment of value and creation of meaning, and its influence on current eating practices. However, this is not an absolutely "true" directional device, and while locavorism urges people to buy foods to support the local community, this is subject to the contextual realities of everyday life. Individuals deploy this system of meaning according to social circumstances—culture, class, age, gender, and income. Consumers may want to consume local foods, but doing so is not always possible, as indicated by 90 per cent of British shoppers, who regard price as the most important factor in determining their selection. Similarly, accepted foods and tastes, such as tea, coffee, sugar, and spices—now essential local foods—cannot be grown in many (if any) localities in Britain and need to be imported. These taste preferences, wrought by history, automatically extend consumption beyond the local. But there is a growing demand for ethical choices, with consumers looking for products with wider ethical foundations, reaching beyond the local into global communities and the environment.

Ethical shopping, it has been suggested, has become an expression of moral principles in an increasingly secular society. In an early ethnographic study of the complexities of British ethical food shopping it was discovered that while there was considerable talk about ethics, it usually did not translate into purchases (Miller 2001, 3, 126, 141). To explain this, Daniel Miller offered three interpretations: first, that there was the off-putting "crank" image of ethical shoppers; second, that broader altruism was more concerned with personal health than concern for the environment or animal welfare; and finally, that shoppers' "moral geography"

ended at the threshold of their homes, meaning that shopping choices had to look to a "moral economy" based upon limited financial means, and the needs of the family first and foremost, not the welfare of others (Miller 2001, 130–34). Through two decades, significant changes have occurred. As noted, while food prices still determine the selection for the majority of British shoppers, 62 per cent also regarded "quality" as a determinant. Despite the amount of packaging on British food, the ability to see, handle, and sensorially assess foodstuffs was reported as a means to assess its quality. Furthermore, value was assigned through certification labelling and information, provenance, and healthfulness (DEFRA 2017, 20, 55). For instance, over 50 per cent of consumers expressed concern over the amount of sugar in foods, and more than 40 per cent looked to certification to ensure animal welfare (56). Labels identify some food as certified organic, fairly traded, free range, and certified humanely reared and sustainably fished. By 2014, sales of such foods reached £8.5 billion, increasing from 2009's £5.5 billion, and now accounting for 9.2 per cent of all household food sales. Some of these were bought from farmers' markets; otherwise they featured in the offerings of the major supermarkets (21).

Over the last decade, sales of sustainable fish have increased in Britain, for instance, from £178 million in 2009 to £0.5 billion in 2014, and independently certified humanely reared animal foods increased by 110 per cent to £122 million (DEFRA 2017, 21, 56). This returns us to

FIGURE 9.12
British Farmed Asparagus: A supermarket's fake farm sells "local" produce.

our localized global foods—sushi and burgers—with direct ethical concerns about the welfare of animal species, and the environmental consequences of harvesting. These are far-reaching, with sustainable fisheries organizations such as the Blue Oceans Institute and the international monitoring organization, the Marine Stewardship Council, actively advising consumers about the impact of their fish-eating habits on this last wild resource. Many sushi providers, such as the British chain, Yo! Sushi, have moved to more sustainable fisheries and work hard to inform consumers about their ethical practices. In Canada, Oceanwise labels have contributed to the previously discussed public debate about the sustainability of wild salmon and the place of cheaper farmed salmon. Some hamburger sellers are also taking the ethical requirements that consumers demand into consideration and are making a commitment to animal welfare by sourcing their ingredients from animals raised without hormones or steroids. Currently, only a very small number of fast food hamburger chains can offer animal welfare ethical choices, and, realistically, some consumers register a healthy scepticism concerning the extent of these claims, often dismissing them as "greenwashing."

Just like other global foodstuffs, coffee links producers and consumers in relationships that can be fraught, divisive, exploitative, equitable, and satisfying. Interestingly, in an effort to claim a place in the large coffee market, a company can re-exoticize the drink's identity, tell a story, and declare a brand that distinguishes its coffee from that of another company (Weiss 1996). The large coffee retailers are happy to provide evocative resources to fill consumers' imaginations, helping to not only establish their presence in people's minds but also suggest an acquaintance between producers and consumers. Images revolving around the producers of coffee and the countries the coffee comes from, such as Ethiopia, Kenya, and Guatemala, create the impression that they are no longer anonymous and distant but known and closer. This is a good example of the sliding scale of foodscapes—one local locality is linked to another, which brings the world's coffee-growing regions into familiar territory. For instance, Starbucks has a limited-release blend from Guatemala's Antigua Valley called *Casi Cielo*, meaning "almost heaven," marketed as "a winter tradition and a fine dining accompaniment offering elegant floral aromas, lemony flourishes and dark cocoa notes." This conjures up romantic ideas of Guatemala as a source of ethereal coffee, and images of volcanic peaks adorn some of the promotional material, together with the reassurance that the coffee is "responsibly grown" and "ethically traded" (Starbucks 2012). It is also part of Guatemala's own coffee marketing, which promotes single-source coffees, ripe for discerning consumers (United States Department of Agriculture [USDA] 2016). These coffees appeal to notions of artisanal production, and have been called a "third wave" of coffee culture, cultivating very discerning tastes and capable of achieving a new market share (Tucker 2017, 145). The referencing of environmental and ethical concerns by transnational corporations such as Starbucks is indicative of their awareness of the value consumers place on food that is "clean," both socially and environmentally. It can, however, be challenging to discover the extent to which large corporations discharge their

FIGURE 9.13
All Meat is Local, Lancashire: The sign in this butcher's shop addresses locavore sentiments.

ethical responsibilities. Independently administered fairly traded certification programs work by guaranteeing farmers set prices for their products, and bonuses that are used for water purification, housing, education, and benefits, allowing growers to support themselves with dignity and sustain their communities (Tucker 2017, 137–43; West 2012). Environmental issues are also paramount: helping preserve rainforests, biodiversity, water conservation, and mitigate against climate change. In Britain, certified fair trade foods gained 19 per cent of the ethical market share, generating sales of £1.6 billion, and Rainforest Alliance occupied 24 per cent with £2.0 billion sales (DEFRA 2017, 21). These include sales of coffee, tea, sugar, chocolate, spices and bananas—some of the necessities that even committed locavores cannot do without.

These statistics add weight to the argument that since the late 1990s, the locavore revitalization movement, combined with food scares, has had an effect, replacing the "crank" with the new normal of a health-conscious "foodie" (de Solier 2013). The WHO discourse has also worked to keep personal health issues at the top of people's minds: the spectre of NCDs. The related global discourse on climate change and environmental awareness has shifted the threshold of altruism into our relationship with the biosphere, but not at the expense of people. Similarly, locavorism's celebration of food, its tastes, and its healthfulness has brought discernible quality to the fore, reinforcing these values, and encouraging consumers pick food that looks fresh and tempting. The emphasis on provenance has raised the profile of all "local" foods, even those foods that have travelled long distances, and their role in supporting community livelihoods.

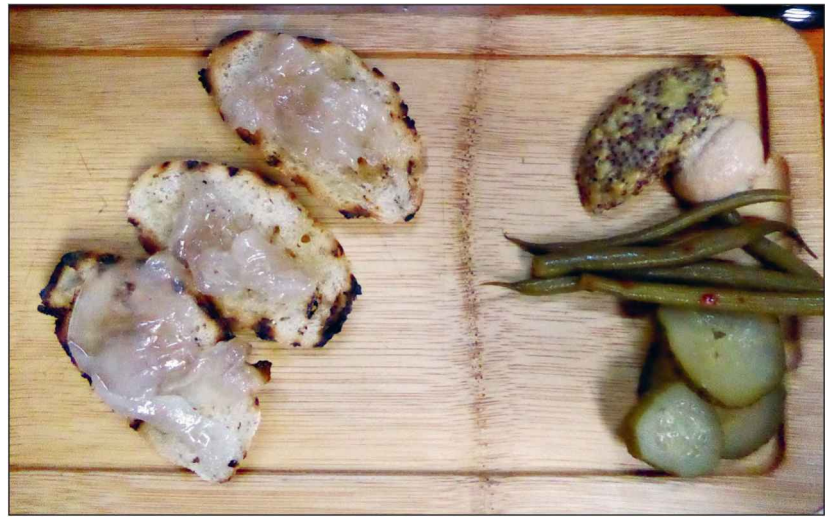

FIGURE 9.14
Lardo on the Global Menu: An example of "virtuous globalization," which cultivates a global demand for specialized local products to ensure their commercial viability. *Lardo*, once the food of Italian marble quarrymen, is now elite gourmet fare.

For instance, the Slow Food Movement's "virtuous globalization" has led distant consumers in America to become aware of the wonders of global local foods, such as Italy's *lardo di Colonnata* (a cured pork fat), boosting their international sales and reputation (Leitch 2003). In commercial terms, it is argued that the success of any heritage foods and dishes often hinges on establishing a wider market, beyond the local. At first glance, the globalization of local heritage foods could disturb the focus of locavorism, but it appears instead to extend the depth of field across interconnected locales that can support one another. It broadens the culinary imagination through the sharing of similar foods and concerns. Here, the threshold of locavorism becomes more flexible and inclusive, which helps to explain how coffee, for example, can be reconciled within its borders. Just as the Haya wonder about northern coffee drinkers, so their concern is reciprocated. Fair trade products attempt to make consumers feel a part of another local community, albeit one that is half a world away—widening the public imaginary of food production to encompass the fortunes of distant producers whose lives have shifted through the demand for out-of-season and exotic ingredients.

We can see that consumption choices will be influenced by personal tastes, habits, finances, social and cultural expectations, availability, and time constraints, and the decision-making process must be understood as porous, soaking up the immediate context and the information it oozes. This includes marketing, government advice, any echoes of any public discourses—from experts or friends—surrounding a product, used by consumers to evaluate the costs and

FIGURE 9.15
An Armful of Farmers' Produce: A selection of fresh, seasonal vegetables ready to be taken home.

benefits of their decisions with regard to their personal health and identity, and that of the nation. Just as it is difficult to apply a cost-benefit analysis to hunter-gatherers' decisions, it is equally difficult to understand the shopper as an "optimizing rational agent of economic theory" (Douglas [1973] 2003, 4). But the hybridity of local and global shopping brings a sharing of risks and rewards between consumers and producers, allowing communities to gain access to food through more transparent market exchanges, secure in the knowledge of whose hands have passed the goods along the chain, and how people's lives are dependent upon one another. This is a reshaping of local food provisioning, made possible by the ease of global communication, through which the global food system can become known—and distant producers may no longer be anonymous farmers half a world away. Global foods become localized, digested, and made meaningful.

SELECTED READINGS

Oxfeld, Ellen. 2017. *Bitter and Sweet: Food, Meaning, and Modernity in Rural China.* California Studies in Food and Culture, edited by Darra Goldstein. Oakland: University of California Press.

Following in the tradition of Audrey Richard's work with the Bemba, this highly readable ethnography uses food as the lens to explore generational attitudes to food, rural and urban life, connectedness, and community in the Chinese village of Moonshadow Pond. The book's conclusions are local, but global in their implications, and the ethnography offers a timely comparison of people's lives anywhere as we all grapple with food security and sustainability.

West, Paige. 2012. *From Modern Production to Imagined Primitive: The Social World of Coffee from Papua New Guinea*. Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press.

The localization of global commodities draws consumers into the lives of others across the world, and this book about Papua New Guinean coffee producers provides important comparative insights to complement those in the chapter. This ethnography covers many levels of connected social lives and reveals everyone's precarious livelihoods across the global system.

Trubek, Amy B. 2008. *The Taste of Place: A Cultural Journey into Terroir*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Offering a "culinary journey into terroir" this is a first-hand account told through specific foods, including maple syrup, cheese, and wine. It includes lots of local and global examples of the construction of taste, and a careful reflection on the meanings that surround the concept.

FIGURE E.1

Takeaway Bag: Too much to eat? Take the leftovers for another meal.

EPILOGUE

LEFTOVERS TO TAKEAWAY

One bright April day in 1989, I was invited to have lunch with one of the Haida hereditary chiefs I had worked with in Old Massett. He wanted to go to the local Chinese-Canadian restaurant in New Masset; a good place to eat, with lots of food, I was told. I was nearing the end of my fieldwork and he wanted to talk about what I had learned during my months in the community, and what impressions would I take away to sustain my memory in Britain. We laughed, reminisced, and talked about Haida art, community life, kinship, politics, and the deep emotional connection to the islands of Haida Gwaii. We shared several dishes from the restaurant's menu: sweet and sour pork, lemon chicken, stir-fried beef in black bean sauce, and an ample serving of fried rice. At the conclusion of the meal we sat back, relaxed, contemplated the food, and discussed our shared experience. This was not specifically Haida food, but it was made and eaten locally, and was enjoyed as the background to our conversation about Haida culture. As time moved forward into the afternoon, the restaurant became quieter, and it was time to pay the bill and collect our plastic-wrapped leftovers. The chief insisted it was "his treat" and was adamant I should accept his gift without too much fuss, and I acquiesced gratefully. He was pleased to take the "doggy bag," noting they were like *kowkleth*, the leftovers used to judge a community feast or potlatch. The more leftovers, the better; they give you something to eat later and a way to think about the previous meal. The restaurateurs thanked us for our business and returned to their tasks of wiping the tables and setting the cutlery, and in the back the distinctive clatter of washing up could be heard. The door chimed shut behind us, and we walked back to the village along the beach, with the plastic bag of leftovers catching the ocean breeze.

As I look back on this meal now, I reflect on the leftover memories of what I learned about Haida culture through food—and while this meal was marked as "Chinese" food, it was part of the local community's eating culture, and part of a wider sense of Canadian culture. In this one foodscape, many culinary practices coexist. The Haida do eat their traditional foods, such

as salmon, halibut, razor clams, and seaweed, but they also buy foods and make dishes that are from other cuisines, and they eat Chinese-Canadian meals; this does not deny the presence of their cuisine nor their distinct culture. A story I was told in Old Massett concerned the "pizza test," which referred to a lawyer for the Crown at a land claims court hearing asking if First Nations people ate pizza. For the lawyer, First Nations people eating pizza meant that they had become assimilated, and their distinct Aboriginal rights would be extinguished. But the eating of new foods does not extinguish culture, and all the inhabitants of Old Massett, whether Haida or not, will eat their learned home cuisine and sample others that are available. It is no different in rural or urban communities across Canada, North America, Europe, or anywhere else. Everywhere that food is acquired by production or purchase, it will be organized and classified, given values and meanings that reference tradition, nutrition, and personal preferences. The ingredients and flavours are simultaneously local and global, but are made sense of in the place of consumption by members of different ethnic groups, who engage with one another in the daily tasks of life. Women tend to cook at home, and men willingly cook in public, and there can be gender crossover in both contexts. Recipes are performed from memory or from books, and websites are consulted; new dishes are made and old ones reaffirmed as favourites. Kids watch, and some learn, and others wait for their meals to arrive. On occasion, people will eat out, hosted by relatives, friends, and the community, and in return guests will be invited back in reciprocal and redistributive rounds of eating. The food will be remarked upon, a topic of discussion, a public cuisine, and it will serve as a guide to mark the social occasion and judge its social and cultural significance. The living cuisine of the Haida crosses from private to public life, is cultural, and identifies the Haida Nation. Restaurants may also be frequented, and there will be a choice of differing ethnic cuisines, consumed in the company of family and friends following the protocols of the usual gastro-politics. The food will be discussed, assessed, and judged using gastronomic knowledge to mark the occasion, with possible leftovers prolonging the experience and bringing the food into the familiarity of domestic life. These general patterns are reproduced across Canada, mediated by place, income, ethnicity, and personal likes and dislikes; elsewhere in the world, we can discern patterns that will be influenced by the specific context but will share many commonalities. It is these general patterns that have been examined throughout the book, using the concept of cuisine as a guide to identify the similarities in eating cultures, and to explore the settlement and mobility of ingredients, flavours, and dishes, combined with the movement of people carrying culinary and gastronomic knowledge across the world. Any cuisine must be located in its social, cultural, political, economic, and historical circumstances; it is an amalgamation of what we eat; how, with whom, and when; and what we think and say about it. Cuisine is much more than a sum of dishes—it is everything we have, think, and do with food.

FIGURE E.2
Empty Plate: All finished—or perhaps a second helping?

TAKEAWAY CUISINE

Throughout this book, the concept of cuisine has been applied as a means to draw attention to its presence as a facet of everyone's culture. It is often easier to identify other people's traditions and practices and harder to find our own distinct patterns. For this reason, it is worth reflecting on some of the qualities of cuisines that make them integral to our cultural identity, although they are often overlooked. Cuisine is learned, with food tastes and individual preferences probably being the first site of enculturation and socialization. Infants are fed by their mothers, and other family members, and grow up experiencing their culinary traditions as a matter of daily life. This transforms the culture's complex classification of food, its values and meanings, into sensations and memories of food, embodying a cuisine within the physical person. This includes the timing of meals; the sensations of repletion and hunger, while physiologically based, are all profoundly shaped by enculturation. Similarly, culinary knowledge—around edibility, ingredients, flavours, cooking techniques, dishes, and the etiquette of eating—is passed on, learned, and shared. A cuisine's food rules are learned at home, put into action when eating with others, and augmented by advice from others—such as what to buy and how to cook it, and what the appropriate food choices are for any given occasion. The learning of culture and cuisine is so ingrained that we are often unaware of its presence. However, through the enculturation experience, a liking for the tastes and textures of foods

is developed, together with preferences for the combinations of flavours that impart a deep connection to food, which is capable of triggering memories and emotions. It is through these sensory, embodied responses that we may become aware of our enculturation—without verbalizing it—and the ways in which we share our tastes with others. Once a cuisine becomes codified as a written collection of recipes and organized as cookbooks, its knowledge and content take on a more fixed form than its orally transmitted, more flexible version. This written formulation of a cuisine then has a life of its own, capable of being learned by people from other cultures, and can create disputes about the authenticity of the lived cuisine compared to the written cuisine.

As well as being learned, cuisine is also shared. The sensuousness of food is recognized as a significant component of its power to connect people, places, and occasions together as intimately shared aspects of their identity (Sutton 2000, 2001; Holtzman 2006, 2009). The tastes, smells, and appearance of food—especially the familiar—remind us of when we have eaten it before, who with, and in what place. This allows people to inhabit a shared social and cultural existence, beginning with family and friends, but extending outward into wider society, as we imagine others eating the same readily available foods as us. The sharing of cuisine arises from the available ingredients, flavours, cooking methods, and organization of the day into eating patterns that fit the working life. The internal structure of meals, and their repetitive pattern from daily to weekly, monthly to annually, marks the passing of time and offers a continuity that is capable of accommodating changes to the overall culinary theme (Douglas [1975] 1997; Sutton 2001, 105). Cuisines are generally located in a particular place, influenced by history and the environment, and serve to communicate a common experience, easily drawn on as a source of nationalist sentiment. Interestingly, the range of social groups in society—defined by age, gender, specialization, class, and ethnicity, and the type of relations that exist between these categories—will diffuse the shared quality of cuisine and culture. For instance, we might all share in the knowledge of potatoes as a staple, but differ in our class-based preferences for fried, mashed, boiled, scalloped, or *au gratin* potatoes. This translates into the existence of differentiated cuisines, offering "high" and "low" versions of a shared culinary tradition, and provides the opportunity to reveal social distinction through eating and engaging in gastronomic demonstrations of taste. A cuisine materializes the social order and people's place within it. This ability of shared food to be reflective of social diversity reveals another quality of cuisine: it is symbolic.

Symbols are things that, through convention, come to stand for other things, and thereby communicate complex meanings. Language is the symbolic system of human culture, and cuisine can be likened to language to illustrate its symbolic dimension. Both language and cuisine are equally capable of being exaggerated, or projected, as a mark of social and cultural identity. However, language and cuisine are essential to everyday life, and they pass by as unremarkable and habitual activities, given that we speak and eat throughout the day. Just as language can

be learned and spoken by non-natives, so too can a cuisine be made and eaten by those whose food is different. A cuisine's ingredients, like words, can be acquired from many sources, and its flavours, like accents, can be copied at will to produce dishes or statements capable of communicating meaning to the diner or listener. This is particularly true when a cuisine has been written down, formulated as a series of culinary rules to be followed to replicate its content. A cuisine's choices of ingredients, flavours, and cooking methods are all packed with meaning—good, bad, and ambiguous—ranging from their effect on the physical and spiritual to their connotations in terms of status (for instance, gender and class); their appropriateness for the social circumstances, time of day, or year; and their ability to reference tradition, modernity, hybridity, locality, and the global.

Food is an artifact, like many others employed by humans, that is created with thought and skill, and shaped through aesthetic principles, and that references existing knowledge to serve current expectations. As an artifact, it will be produced, reproduced, exchanged, and employed as part of ongoing social relationships; unlike many other artifacts, however, it has a finite life, which culminates in its destruction but leaves a bodily and intellectual memory of its consumption. The symbolic component of cuisine, its communicative quality, means that it cannot be divorced from its wider interrelationships with all other aspects of people's lives: the systems of production, exchange, kinship, politics, religion, social organization, and ideology. This makes cuisine integrated within all cultural systems, and exposes another important quality: cuisines will change through adaptations to new circumstances, such as environmental and technological shifts, and to new influences, such as exposure to new culinary styles brought by immigrants or new medical knowledge that changes food rules. The processes of culture change, such as diffusion, acculturation, invention, innovation, creolization, emulation, and assimilation, are all at work in shaping culinary change. But throughout the processes of change, there is continuity with the way things were before; a cuisine's flavours and cooking techniques easily embrace the new and incorporate it into its dishes and eating traditions. Invented traditions of cuisines, and culture, are the means to address change, and make it acceptable, authentic and real, by referencing the familiar. This dynamic aspect of cuisine, its chameleon-like quality—now you see it, now you don't—can make it difficult to itemize its specific form and content in a particular context or time. For instance, a liking for chicken tikka masala, an invented culinary tradition, does not extinguish an older generation's sense of British cuisine; rather, the concept is elastic enough to encompass both preferences. With globalization, the rate of change—of any sort—has increased, and just as the concept of culture cannot be rooted to just one place, nor essentialized as a series of characteristics, neither can a cuisine. However, this does not make the concept of cuisine, or culture, redundant or obsolete; rather, by examining its characteristics,, we can begin to understand its saliency, relevance, complexity, and vigour in addressing our places in the world. We have to recognize that we all have a cuisine, and are influenced by other people's cuisines, as we engage in a wider social world.

TAKEAWAY LEFTOVERS

The leftovers of this book are concerned with the talk—the public discourse surrounding local eating culture and cuisine—and, given the global scope of the contemporary foodscape, it includes the talk about the diverse national and ethnic cuisines that are locally known, tasted, and discussed. Public discourse is part of everyday conversations and is disseminated by the media. It is situated locally, and through global mediascapes it links the world in the instantaneous sharing of ideas, issues, and events. While public discourse surrounds any aspect of culture and society, it is particularly prominent around food, with food advice and knowledge circulating through government nutritional guidelines, restaurant reviews, cookery books, food writers, bloggers, television news, and food shows—indeed, its range is so extensive that an exhaustive list cannot be given. This discourse will surround your relationship with food and can be applied to your Smartphone Food Record. Look at your pictures and reflect on your choices, and the wider commentaries that provide meanings and values to these foods.

At present, there are four discernible but intertwined themes about food in the public discourse that have echoed through the pages of this book and will continue to do so long after it has been read and shelved. These themes concern the issues of food's nutritional role; the sustainability of production, both environmentally and socially; the state of culinary knowledge; and the gastronomic talk of taste and distinction. We have heard all of these themes, and they inform our understanding of food, adding meaning and lending value, and we all listen and weigh them up before rejecting them or incorporating them into our cuisine.

The nutritional discourse has fostered a greater awareness of the fundamental composition of food and its effects on the body. This has allowed us to weigh up the consequences of eating, and develop strategies to navigate our way through "good" and "bad" foods with new rules to guide our consumption (Counihan 1992). As we listen, we hear new advice, such as avoiding the dangerous quantities of "free sugar" in our diets, and sometimes contradictory advice, such as to eat low-fat foods or to avoid them (World Health Organization 2015b). Despite the profusion of studies, this knowledge represents a new step in our relationship with food, and it is being used to try to combat the pandemic of noncommunicable diseases that threatens humanity's health. The challenge for nutritional science will be to reconcile the chemical composition of food with existing cultural classifications of foodstuffs and their rules of consumption to offer meaningful and effective advice. Reducing food to its macronutrients and micronutrients does not address the pleasure people get from eating, and this has to be understood for any realistic dietary change to be successful. To eat healthily demands learning about food, moving beyond a diet, and into cooking and eating as sociable, cultural acts (Ministry of Health of Brazil 2014). Nutrition counselling needs to emulate the success of junk food and make healthy food fit the pressures of working life to provide quick, nutritious satisfaction. Listen to this discourse, and watch it shape our cuisines, just as it has in the past,

FIGURE E.3
Washing Up: An important act to end the ritualized quality of a meal and prepare for future meals.

with medical specialists now replacing religious authorities in classifying our edible world and generating rules for consumption.

Each culture acquires its food from a range of sources found within its traditional territory. However, the ability to manage and access food is a growing concern throughout all the established food-getting strategies—of hunter-gatherers, pastoralists, horticulturalists, and agriculturalists—because they are being challenged by the global economy and climate change. Everywhere, a shift in our relationship with food has occurred, leading to greater distances between consumers and producers, and a greater reliance on purchased food rather than home-grown. This has compromised the environment, initiating a global discourse on climate change and its consequences for our future. Listen to the discourse, and hear the debates about employing new agricultural methods, learning from smaller-scale farming, revitalizing rural communities, preserving resources, recycling waste, and changing our diets. The reach of this discourse extends into our basic relationships with nature, the species upon which we depend for food, and our responsibilities toward their existence. Watch as local communities try to return to local, sustainable, and ethical food provision, while participating in the

global system. The increased mechanization of food getting, and the global intensification of production, distribution, and retail, have triggered grassroots protests about our food system. Localism addresses our local working community and its sustainability, which looks to workers' rights, fair wages, and safe working conditions. These are local issues of agricultural workers, migrant workers, and anyone employed in the commercial food industry, including restaurants. Globally, this involves the producers of food commodities, such as tea and coffee, which many cannot do without, and which cannot grow in some environments. The interconnectedness of the global food provisioning system has brought reflection on the dependency of producers and consumers, with the discourse exploring the responsibility for fair trade despite the distance of the commodity chain. Listen to this discourse, and think about the interconnectedness of people's lives played out through food, and where we eat along the chain from production to consumption.

The two remaining discourses address our most intimate relationships with food: as we prepare it, cook it, and define ourselves through its taste. Cooking and eating are still central to our social lives, but often our working lives determine the allocation of time to these significant acts. The culinary discourse concerns cooking techniques, equipment, and the transmission of knowledge from home cooks across generations, to specialist chefs with apprentices, all learning how to make edible, healthy dishes. These are vital skills, and will be used to transform available ingredients into familiar dishes of a cuisine. This discourse echoes the nutritional discourse of learning to cook and eat healthily, shapes the cuisine of home kitchens, and brings the influence of public cuisines into the realm of the domestic. Listen to this discourse, and watch as cooking is rehabilitated as a pleasurable activity, and as the transmission of culinary knowledge becomes a worthwhile pursuit, bringing new faces into the kitchen to reinvigorate cuisine. This is amplified by the gastronomic discourse, shaped by ideas of culinary taste as a marker of social distinction, which can be loud, but its volume will be reflective of any society's social order. The food we eat defines us; it is about our sense of identity—through age, gender, ethnicity, and sexuality, it communicates who we are. Food will bring anticipation, thought, and pleasure, and taste is not restricted to stratified society, despite gastronomy's origins. Talking of eating as a memorable activity crosses all cultures—a part of gastro-politics, organized by kinship, class, political aspirations, ethnicity, and personal claims of identity work. This is present in all forms of social relationships played out through food, and it spans all the cultures discussed in this book. This discourse demands that we take time to eat, and it provokes an awareness that food is a vehicle for the practice of social and cultural life. It shapes the venue for the companionable chatter of mealtimes, allowing the public discourse to become personal and to influence everyday traditions and practices. Listen to these discourses, and think about your food, because it becomes you.

SELECTED READINGS

Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt. 2015. *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400873548.

Building upon the capacity of foods to address social and environmental change, this book takes a global journey following *matsutake* mushrooms, which grow in areas that have been "destroyed" by logging but provide a new niche for their growth. This account offers a portrait of the resiliency of people and plant species, despite the hardships created by capitalism and **neoliberalism**.

Probyn, Elspeth. 2016. *Eating the Ocean*. Durham: Duke University Press. https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822373797.

Following bluefin tuna fishing, this multi-sited ethnography calls for ethical eating, and takes gastro-politics across the threshold of intimacy into our relationships with other species. Together with Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing's work, this book looks toward our interconnectedness with the environment, and the necessity of carefully stewarding those relationships for the benefit of the whole rather than only its parts.

GLOSSARY

100-Mile diet
the archetypal local diet, which restricts consumption of foods to only those produced within a 100-mile radius of the consumer. For practitioners, access to coffee, tea, chocolate, and spices have proven to be challenging (Smith and MacKinnon 2007).

Agroecology
farming model which is a diversified approach, suited to local environmental circumstances, and encourages polycropping, animal husbandry, and maintenance of the ecosystem. Stands in opposition to the monocropping of industrial agriculture and seeks to replace chemical inputs where possible, optimize biodiversity, stimulate interactions between different species, and build long-term fertility from the soil upward. It works with the environment, and draws on local knowledge and biodiversity of place (pollinators, animal and plant species genetically adapted to the local environment) to create healthy, varied, foods, and supports the livelihoods of local people. This supports small-scale, family farming; is more labour-intensive; and is now deemed to be capable of producing yields that positively affect food security.

Aquaculture
the farming of fish species using ponds, feeding, spawning, and harvesting. The earliest known aquaculture dates to 1000 BC in China (Nash 2000).

Ark of Taste
referencing the biblical ark that saved the world's species, the Ark of Taste was begun in 1996 by the Slow Food Movement to identify and protect food species and traditions that are jeopardized by industrial agriculture, standardization, and environmental degradation. The ark now has over 1,000 food products from over 50 countries on its list (Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity n.d.).

Authenticity
the quality of an activity or thing, for instance, that rests upon it matching some presupposed assumptions about it being genuine, or real, in some capacity. Gauging the authenticity of food can depend upon the ethnicity of the maker, or a sense of conforming to "tradition"—identified by the use of ingredients, flavours, and techniques that are rooted in an understanding of the way things used to be, or the way things are done in a particular place by a specific

culture. These assumptions may not be entirely accurate, given that it is very difficult to fix any human activity as a certain set of criteria for it to be deemed authentic. One person's samosas may be authentic to some, and not to another. It can be said that authenticity is relative to the knowledge and experience of the beholder; it is a sliding scale of evaluation.

Bio-ethnocentrism

using one's own physiologic response to foods as the standard, and negatively judging others' responses as abnormal, pathological, and in need of correction. Attitudes toward the inability to drink milk are a good example of bio-ethnocentrism (Wiley 2004, 2011).

Biointensive Farming

farming done in small garden plots, using hand tools and adhering to carefully organized cycles of plantings, with vegetables first, using nitrogen fixers; then heavy-to-light feeders in rotation; and then grains, suited to the climate and diet. Then the rotation begins again. Domesticated animals, like goats and chickens, forage in the gardens, helping to cultivate the soil and keep down weeds (Richardson 2010, 97).

Blue revolution

used to describe the industrialization of aquaculture, or fish farming.

Commensality

the act of sharing food together.

Commodification

the process of transforming objects, people, land, labour, and services into commodities, altering their worth to that of exchange-value to extract a profit. It can hide the presence of people in the transactions from producers to final consumers, but it simultaneously links them together and provides opportunities at each site along a commodity chain for localized meaning and value to be created through de-commodification.

Commodity

an article of commerce, an object of trade, that can be a raw material or manufactured item that will have use-value for its consumers and exchange-value for its producers. A commodity can travel short or long distances, and will involve many hands in its production, distribution, retail, and eventual consumption, linking people across trade networks.

Cosmology

a conceptual mental map of existence, the order of people, things, forces, and space. Encompasses how the totality works; the interconnection and the forces that animate reality. These include the natural and supernatural worlds, physical and metaphysical, whether seamless or not, and all the forces at work to make life possible. Grounded in science and religion, drawn upon to make sense of life's daily events. These will differ by levels of specialized knowledge, and experience. Cosmologies are used in shaping ideology, lending legitimacy, and confirming those political ideas that

directly influence attitudes and behaviours expressed in everyday life. Cosmologies are not fixed and will change, accommodating new information and reflecting ideological biases.

Cosmopolitanism

a social orientation that claims an easy acquaintance with, and acceptance of, cultural diversity. This can be manifested as a willingness to eat the foods of global cuisines, and in so doing demonstrate a broad repertoire of culinary experience that can be translated into cultural capital (Warde, Martens, and Olsen 1999, 123). It is conceptually linked to cultural omnivorousness. Cosmopolitanism is rooted in an awareness of wider global belonging and participation in its issues, such as climate change, environmental protection, and human rights (Johnston, Baumann, and Cairns 2009, 165–67).

Creolization

a term derived from linguistics, used to describe the process of amalgamating diverse, introduced elements to create something new: language, food, dance, art, for instance. The outcome will depend on the context—the what, who, where, and when—and will involve making the introduced elements appropriate to the context. In terms of cooking, it is the creative techniques used to make global foods into local dishes, and the means to adjust cuisines to changing circumstances (Hannerz 1987; Wilk 2006, 112–121; Tibère 2016).

Cuisine

a somewhat self-conscious, essentialized concept of the food of a culture that has a series of defining characteristics: ingredients, flavours, cooking methods, resultant dishes, and rules of consumption, all of which are shaped by the social context. A cuisine can be defined as a facet of culture concerned with ideas and beliefs, behaviour, and practices of people in relation to the creation and use of food that is socially and physically sustaining.

Cultural capital

term used by Pierre Bourdieu to describe the use of such things as intellect, taste, refinement, and experience to claim social distinction. Food can be used to demonstrate cultural capital by showcasing culinary and gastronomic knowledge by, for example, eating at exotic restaurants.

Cultural omnivorousness

a concept that builds upon Bourdieu's ideas about social distinction, whereby cultural capital can be demonstrated through consuming foods, and other forms of popular culture, across ethnic, racial, and class boundaries. As an eclectic form of consumption, it is supported by capitalism's endlessly differentiated market. It is an identity-work strategy, particularly studied with reference to people's dining habits, as in Britain, for instance (Warde, Martens, and Olsen 1999; Warde and Martens 2000, 79, 135; Warde 2009a).

Culture
the concept of culture has been through much iteration in anthropological thought, beginning with a bounded, essentialized entity composed of a series of interrelated aspects of people's lives, such as language, food getting, kinship, marriage, and political and social organization. The concept, through fieldwork and theoretical refinement, has become a much more complex, dynamic, and changeable entity, which will be negotiated and contested through the social factors of status, such as age, gender, rank, class, specialty, sexuality, race, and ethnicity.

De-commodification
process of meaning-making engaged in by consumers as they invest goods with significances, that may be beyond those intended by the manufacturers and marketers. This turns consumption into a creative act of identity work.

Demographic transition
used to describe the change in birth rates between industrializing and post-industrial societies. As industrialization occurs, it has been argued, there is a population boom, followed by a gradual decline in birth rates. This has been explained as a consequence of a greater sense of security—good food production, health care, better quality of life—that sees less need to have more children, and a greater need to have fewer children who can be successful. It has been used as a justification for development directed toward periphery nations, with the rationale that global birth rates will decline as industrialization occurs. Demographers, however, debate whether this is a universally applicable outcome of industrialization (Johnson-Hanks 2008).

Dietary transition
is the recognition that as subsistence practices intensify, people's diets change, seeing people eat more food, and particularly meat (Pelto and Pelto 1983; Smil 2001, 214). One transition is from the agrarian to the proletarian diets, which delivered through industrial cuisine.

Ecogastronomy
a term associated with the Slow Food Movement, to describe the fusion of ecological concerns surrounding the production of food with the pleasures of gastronomy. The three principles of the Slow Food Movement are good, clean, and fair foods, all interlinked through sustainable environmental practices that foster local production, community, and personal identity.

Epicurean
used to describe a person with refined and fastidious taste, especially in food and wine.

Ethnosite
used to describe ethnic restaurants as a place where intercultural encounters occur. These are deterritorialized expressions of the originating culture that allow diners to become culinary tourists without going far from home. At such ethnosites, members of the ethnic group can reaffirm their own ethnicity through eating familiar food; for

non-members, there is the possibility of appropriation and acceptance (Turgeon and Pastinelli 2002).

Evolutionary gastronomy

term used by some nutritional anthropologists who consider ethnic cuisines as evidence of long-term gene-food interactions that emerged through environmentally specific selection pressures—such as disease and drought—and led to discernible genetic changes in ethnic populations over the last 1,500 years (Nabhan 2006, 10). Lactase impersistance, favism, and diabetes have all been explored from this perspective, which regards cuisines as highly specific assemblages of ingredients and flavours that can bestow an evolutionary advantage on the ethnic group.

Fair trade

an alternative economic exchange system that looks to the social and environmental sustainability of food production, distribution, and retail. It seeks to pay a price for foods and other commodities that provide a dignified standard of living, and reflects the worth of the food or product at its (often distant) site of consumption. Fair trade coffee, for example, guarantees that the coffee producers are receiving a wage that allows them to make a decent living and support their families and community, and it often also looks to production methods that are environmentally sustainable, such as organic and shade-grown, to protect the biodiversity of the growing areas.

Fast food

as the term implies, food that is made quickly, conveniently accessed, easy to eat, and affordable in terms of time and money. It encompasses many different forms, from hamburgers to satay sticks. It can be produced by global chains, local franchises, and by roadside sellers of street food. Fast food's origins are rooted within the processes of industrialization and urbanization, and it represents the shift of food production and consumption from home to the public sphere. It is often presented as the opposite of slow food, but its presence across the globe cannot be presumed to have the same meanings and values ascribed in every location. Fast food is implicated in the rise of non-communicable disesases (NCDs), warranting WHO scrutiny and wider societal debate.

Folk taxonomies

forms of local knowledge that organize aspects of people's social and natural worlds, such as kinship and fauna and flora. They are about identifying relationships, and about naming and defining behaviour in response to these known components of life. Classifications of food can be understood as folk taxonomies, revealing a culture's system of meaning and value assignment.

Food safety

the checking of food to ensure that it is free of harmful contaminants that may cause illness among those who consume the products. The issue becomes: who is responsible for guaranteeing that the food is fit for

consumption? The long-term tendency for the deliberate adulteration and accidental contamination of foods brought governments and retailers into the position of verifying a food's safety; however, this has proven to be notoriously difficult to achieve. Anxiety about food safety extends through all cultures, and many food rules are indicative of this concern, but people's ability to stop the contamination varies (Freidberg 2004; 2005).

Foodscapes

term used to capture the global flows of foodstuffs and cuisines, from places of origin to be localized anywhere. It is one of the global scapes used to imagine and capture the complexity of the global system. Foodscapes can be examined ethnographically—on the ground, by exploring all foods and cuisines in a particular place, and the ways in which social and ethnic relations, together with identity work, are played out (Ferrero 2002). Foodscapes are about how we imagine the global food system, learned from public food discourses and experienced through local sites of consumption, including supermarkets, restaurants, and the home.

Food security

the basic provision of adequate and acceptable food to members of a society. Its attainment has four pillars: availability, access, stability, and utilization. People become aware of the importance of food security when it is apparent that the food provisioning system is failing—when its opposite, food insecurity, is evident. Initially defined by the UN and its agencies, it has now fully entered public food discourses and consciousness.

Food sovereignty

concerns the involvement in, and protection of, local food sources, knowledge, livelihoods, traditions, and the environment. As with any form of sovereignty, it is about asserting power and gaining control over a territory and its resources. Food sovereignty is closely tied to the issue of food security, and it seeks to return the status of food as food, rather than as a commodity, to see it as an essential right for life. It also makes the issue of food an aspect of citizenship. Food sovereignty is an issue of the popular imagination, as in Canada's People's Food Policy, and concerns those most directly involved in making decisions about food, such as women and small-scale farmers.

Gastro-anomie

a term coined by French sociologist Claude Fischler to capture the anxiety felt by consumers when faced with an immense range of foods to which they have no connective knowledge or rules to help determine their choices. This is a latter-day variant of the omnivore's dilemma, or the omnivore's paradox, described by Fischler as the challenge faced by omnivores as they decide what to eat in the age of industrial food. The industrialization of food, and especially fast food, is regarded as the culprit that unleashed gastro-anomie. The often-proposed antidote is a return to traditional eating practices, regarded as rooted in local cuisines.

Gastronomy

the art or science of good eating, and the evocative and knowledgeable discourse surrounding the pleasure of food.

Gastro-politics

described as the "social transactions around food," which serve to bring people together or accentuate differences (Appadurai 1981). The essential and daily presence of food makes it uniquely suited to communicating powerful social messages as it is shared in domestic and public settings. The messages concern ideas about rank and rivalry, solidarity and community, identity and exclusion, intimacy and distance (Appadurai 1981, 494). The term can be extended to capture the way complex social relationships and identity work and are played out through eating and food. It is also employed at the level of the global food system, including the agendas of the UN, transnational food corporations, and state governments.

Genetically modified

term used to describe an organism whose DNA has been modified by the insertion of new strands of DNA into its sequence. These insertions modify the organism to withstand pests, produce larger grains, or some other such presumed advantage. Sometimes this technique is referred to as genetic engineering.

Home

an ideologically wrought concept that identifies the private, domestic context of family life. Particularly laden with meaning and value during Victorian times, when it was the site of the "cult of domesticity." It has a powerful legacy, shaping contemporary ideas about women's responsibilities within domestic life and toward their families. Home comes to have a sentimentalized attachment, and has become especially poignant for migrants, who can still feel a connection to home and their homeland, with food serving as primary vehicle for this nostalgic remembering (Sutton 2000; 2001).

Home economics or domestic science

a reinvention of housework beginning in the 1880s as an endeavour to take science and technology and apply them to women's domestic work. This is credited with bringing nutritional, hygienic, and culinary knowledge into school curricula, and serving as a formalized means of ensuring the transmission of culinary knowledge, albeit in a standardized format that allowed the food industry to establish itself in the kitchens of many nations (Shapiro [1986] 2009).

Hominins

term used to describe all extinct human ancestors and modern humans. It narrowed the definition from hominids, which describes all Great Apes, to only include humans and their ancestors.

Ideology

the complex set of ideas surrounding people's activities, behaviour, and things, that informs attitudes and guides action. It is cultural meanings and values put into action as a force for organizing society. Any ideology is

unconsciously acquired, deeply seated, differently shared, and carries a naturalness that makes it a powerful force in people's lives. Ideologies are the product of historical circumstances, social relations, and the exercise of power to direct, maintain, or change the nature of society.

Invented traditions

an important concept that focuses on the processes to accommodate change and uncertainty through introducing new, repetitive, ritual-like practices (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1984). These practices, such as cooking Christmas puddings and wearing kilts, reconcile the present circumstances with the past by suggesting direct continuities and references with the way things were done in the past. The traditions are associated with nations, nationalism and the creation of a shared identity. The power of invented traditions lies in their ability to be entirely believable as long-standing cultural acts. These traditions are no less meaningful or valuable than others and are just as authentic and real.

Lactase persistence (lactose tolerance)

the continued production of the enzyme lactase, necessary for digesting the sugar lactose in milk. This occurred as a genetic mutation in populations in the Old World and parts of Africa where dairy animals were domesticated, and is now found in high frequencies in the descendants of these people (Wiley 2004; 2011, 17–19). Virtually all humans produce lactase when they are young so they can digest the lactose in milk, but it declines after weaning. Lactase impersistence describes the gastrointestinal complaints people suffer when they consume milk as adults and do not have the enzyme lactase to digest it.

Locavore

term coined in 2007 to describe people who want to grow, purchase, and eat local foods. Locavorism is usually associated with home growing (for instance, in community gardens), farmers' markets, and sustainable agricultural practices such as CSA—community supported agriculture. Seasonal food sources are championed, together with home preserving, as means to stock up for the leaner months. The "local" is often defined as within a 160-km (100-mile) radius, but this can be challenging when foodstuffs such as tea, chocolate, coffee, and spices are desired (Smith and MacKinnon 2007; Born and Purcell 2009).

Mainstreaming

the process of bringing people, behaviours, traditions into line with the dominant values and practices of society. In culinary terms, it describes the process of cuisine-making for dominant ethnic groups in plural societies, which are shaped through accommodation to the context: environment, history, presence of other ethnic groups, and available foods. Mainstream cuisine becomes the culinary neutral of society. "Ethnic" cuisines in a plural society gradually become mainstreamed, i.e., take on some characteristics of the dominant cuisine, often for commercial purposes. The cooking techniques of creolization accomplish these adjustments.

Malthusian Trap or Dilemma

named after Thomas Malthus, an eighteenth-century thinker who was concerned with the ability of societies to produce enough food to feed everyone. He believed that population growth was inevitable, but the productive capacity of the land, and any subsistence strategy, was limited. From his perspective, societies would be trapped by a cycle of intensification, supporting population growth, which would later require further intensification. If production could not keep pace with population growth, then undoubtedly misery, starvation, and death would occur. The dilemma concerns whether to be passive, and let natural disasters (such as diseases) or unnatural disasters (such as war) take their toll on the population and relieve the problem; or to be active, controlling reproduction and intensifying production to support the population.

Meaning and value

complex cultural and social significances surround things, actions, and people, which lend them value in everyday life. Value is assigned through some form of applied criteria, to determine a "good-to-bad" continuum of assessment and placement. The interpretation and understanding of meaning-making and value are central to social anthropology and other social sciences.

Neoliberalism

implementation of policies, such as free trade, which deregulate governments' control over industry and trade, thereby allowing greater profits to be generated for investors. This is a cornerstone of contemporary capitalism, which suggests that benefits will come to everyone, and justifies layoffs, the movement of production to less costly locations, and the migration of workers and goods around the globe. It also excuses "austerity measures" imposed by external bodies, such as the International Monetary Fund, European Union, and World Bank, as a means to align a nation's economy with the global system. The measures usually entail reductions in government spending on health care, education, and welfare (Robbins 2011). Neoliberalism is the contemporary reworking of Adam Smith's writings on capitalism, found in *The Wealth of Nations*, which argued that a government should not interfere in the economy but should instead leave its workings to the "invisible hand" of a self-regulating market.

Neolocal

post-marital residence practice whereby a married couple live independently in their new home.

Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs)

cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancers, and chronic respiratory diseases, associated with an unhealthy diet and obesity. These are becoming the major cause of death for humans (Waxman 2004; Popkin and Gordon-Larsen 2004; World Health Organization 2008).

Nuclear family

generally presented as a family unit of a couple and their children, and often associated with a neolocal residence, as in an independent household. The family, however, is not a static concept, and it can include heterosexual and homosexual relationships, single parents, and childless couples. Nuclear families in capitalist societies are still located within broader kinship systems, often based on bilaterality, with dispersed kin who will offer a support network.

Nutraceuticals

a term used to describe foods that serve both nutritional and pharmaceutical functions when ingested. These are foods that have a place in both kitchen cupboards and medicine chests; an example is olive oil, which, in non-Mediterranean societies, was for many years kept in the bathroom as a medicinal agent.

Nutritionism

term used by Michael Pollan to describe the dominant ideology of breaking food down into its nutritional parts. He argues that all food is much "more than the sum of nutrient parts," and that viewing it with such an attitude removes the pleasure of eating (Pollan 2008, 28).

Nutrition transition

term used to describe the nutritional changes wrought on diet as a consequence of shifts in food-getting strategy, most notably with the advent of agriculture and industrial agriculture.

Obesogenic environment

this term recognizes the prevalence of obesity not just as the responsibility of an individual, and situates this condition in the wider environment that determines eating habits, provides foodstuffs, schedules work and activities, and demands the use of physical space that is reliant on technology (Brown and Sweeney 2009, 7).

Omnivore's dilemma

a phrase, coined by psychologist Paul Rozin, that refers to an omnivore's ability to eat a wide range of foods and the resulting difficulty of knowing what to choose from the entire range of available foods and how to ascertain that it is safe. This state is sharpened on the gustatory horns of neophilia (a willingness to try new foods, which has been the omnivore's evolutionary advantage) and cautionary neophobia (reverting to what is already known for fear of eating a toxin hidden in a new food). The solution rests in taste (i.e., toxins are bitter), testing (eating small quantities at first), and traditional food rules, passed down through generations and eventually codified as cuisines (Rozin and Rozin 1981; Rozin 1997, Rozin 2000). Renamed the omnivore's paradox to describe consumers' anxiety, or gastro-anomie, triggered by a lack of reliable criteria to make a selection from so many commercial food products. When food rules become weak, then the omnivore looks to new sources of dietary advice, as explored by Michael Pollan, who resurrected the omnivore's dilemma in the twenty-first century because the identity of food is not always clear. He argues that our food rules

are in need of revision to help us safely choose something to eat (Pollan 2007, 2008, 2009).

Omnivorousness

the ability to eat a wide range of different foods. Omnivores are generalist or non-specialist eaters, which confers an evolutionary advantage by allowing them to acquire energy and nutrition from a wide range of food sources. Omnivorousness, however, does not entail indiscriminate eating; instead, it is governed by cultural rules and personal taste preferences.

Public discourse

the freely given discussion and advice surrounding issues of social and cultural importance. It is never unified, and instead is full of discord and contradictory ideas. It is put into practice because it informs people's actions, and likewise those actions shape discourse. Everyday life is guided by public discourse, but it is also beyond the scope of individuals to shape its content (Miller 2001, 141). At present there are four themes resonating through the Western food discourse: nutrition, culinary interests, gastronomic distinction, and sustainability (both environmental and social). Public discourse can reveal the dominant ideologies operating in society, and its peddling advances the interests of some power holders, whose identity may or may not be revealed.

Redistribution

a type of exchange, often of goods, but also including money, that sees a central authority gather in surpluses and give them away to others as a means of claiming status, creating alliances, or competitively asserting authority. Some feasts are forms of redistribution.

Social capital

Pierre Bourdieu's term to describe the importance of extensive social networks of people that enable them to draw upon information, and economic and political support.

Street food

a form of fast food, sold at semi-permanent stands, or by mobile vendors who walk or travel in some sort of food wagon. Street food has great antiquity, and has long served the needs of travellers and workers without access to kitchens, laying the foundation for the rise of restaurants. Street food can become corporatized and mass produced, but more often it is connected with small-scale independent operators who are thought to produce the authentic taste of the place. In recent years, this has become a trendy alternative to corporate fast food, and is acquiring a slow food velocity in a fast food guise.

Sushi

a Japanese-style fast food that is generally fish on rice. It still carries a Japanese cultural identity although it can be made by non-Japanese workers, and is consumed across the globe as a healthy, aesthetically pleasing foodstuff. There are many different types of sushi, and it is easily localized through inclusion of new ingredients and names, such as the California roll.

Taste
encompasses the physiologic responses of our olfactory and gustatory senses, and the cultural and social refinement of taste to assert difference.

Terroir
a taste of place, most commonly associated with France, and especially the distinct taste of wines from its regions. It is the ultimate refinement and distinction of locality expressed as the flavour of foods and drinks from a specific place. The notion has been successfully cultivated as part of the locavore movement, and has extended well beyond France as an important claim to the unique food traditions of an area, making those ingredients distinct in culinary terms (Guy 2002; Trubek 2008).

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